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# The Lincoln-Douglas Debates 1858

## General Accounts and Commentary

Excerpts from newspapers and other  
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*Harper's Weekly.*  
*Mar. 1861.*

## LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS.

THE President of the Chicago Historical Society, Mr. ISAAC N. ARNOLD, who was a Representative in Congress during the war, and who has long been an eminent member of the bar of Illinois, has recently read an exceedingly interesting paper before the Bar Association of that State at Springfield. It is a sketch of professional reminiscences for forty years, and contains allusions, many of them new and vivid, to the great rivals, LINCOLN and DOUGLAS.

They were both, according to Mr. ARNOLD, strong jury lawyers, and Mr. LINCOLN, upon the whole, the strongest jury lawyer ever known in Illinois. They were both very able in bringing out distinctly the controlling points in a case; both very happy in the examination of witnesses; and LINCOLN unsurpassed in cross-examination. "He could compel a witness to tell the truth when he meant to lie. He could make a jury laugh, and generally weep, at his pleasure. LINCOLN on the right side, and especially when injustice or fraud was to be exposed, was the strongest advocate. On the wrong side or on the defense, where the accused was really guilty, the client with DOUGLAS for his advocate would be more fortunate than with LINCOLN." A stranger listening a while to LINCOLN would be drawn to his side involuntarily. His statement of a case was often so clear and complete that the Court would dispense with argument, and say that if that were his case it would hear the other side. He had in the highest degree the art of persuasion and the power of conviction. He never misstated evidence, and his wit, humor, and anecdote were inexhaustible.

The most famous of popular political debates was the controversy of LINCOLN and DOUGLAS upon the stump in Illinois. It made DOUGLAS Senator, and LINCOLN President. Mr. ARNOLD quotes from a speech of LINCOLN's in 1856, a friendly tribute to DOUGLAS, but it is even more remarkable for its simple expression of that fidelity to conscience and to humanity which is the true splendor of LINCOLN's renown:

"Twenty years ago Judge DOUGLAS and I first became acquainted; then we were both ambitious, I, perhaps, quite as much as he. With me, the race of ambition has been a failure; with him, it has been a splendid success. His name fills the nation, and it is not unknown in foreign lands. I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached. So reached that the oppressed of my species might have shared with me in the elevation, I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

It is pleasant to think of the two men standing side by side at LINCOLN's inauguration confronting civil war with a common patriotism. It is still pleasanter to reflect that Mr. LINCOLN did reach the highest human eminence, and that, according to his desire, the oppressed of his species shared his exaltation.



## PART II

### THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS CAMPAIGN.

The mention of Abraham Lincoln's name in the convention which nominated Fremont and Dayton in 1860 was by no manner of means the introduction of that quaint personality to the politics of the country.

As early as the spring of 1832 he was a candidate for the Indiana Legislature, and in 1834 he was a successful candidate for that position to which he was re-elected in 1836, 1838 and 1840. In 1846 he went to Congress, where he signalized his presence by offering for consideration a scheme for the emancipation of the slaves in the District of Columbia. He was offered the governorship of Oregon Territory by President Taylor, but declined, largely because of the exactions of his rapidly-growing professional practice, and, because, too, having become recognized as the most influential exponent of the principles of the Whig party in the West, and especially in the State of Illinois, his friends dissuaded him from leaving to others a field which promised him such good results in the future. From 1854, at which time the entire country was profoundly agitated by the repeal of the Missouri compromise, political ambition and generous impulse in behalf of the down-trodden race kept pace, side by side, in Lincoln's breast. This act of Senator Douglas, for many years a warm and personal friend, and a bitter political opponent of Lincoln, aroused a feeling akin to distrust in the minds of his old friends, and emphasized the hatred of those who disliked and opposed him personally and politically. In spite of their friendly personal relations Lincoln and Douglas were brought face to face, as representatives each of a fighting party. The encroachments of slavery upon the Territories Lincoln regarded as a gross breach of faith, and in a series of remarkable political discussions attracted the attention of the nation to the virility of his arguments, and the breadth and scope of his constitutional apprehensions.

Senator Shields neared the close of his senatorial term.

A legislature was in session, and upon it devolved a senatorial choice. Lincoln was the favorite of the Whigs, Shields of the Democrats, with a few scattering votes among the Democrats for Lyman Trumbull. Trumbull was a Democrat who believed in the constitution and opposed the extension of slavery, and through the influence of Mr. Lincoln, who dreaded above all things the return of Mr. Shields, or any other Democrat who would stand by Douglas in the fight then imminent, and who urged his friends to vote for Trumbull, there was secured for the upper house a distinguished law giver, a statesman without fear and without blemish, who served his country and his constituents for many years thereafter with intelligence and earnestness of purpose.

It was a great fight.

Those days which tried men's souls, which turned pruning hooks into spears, made statesmen from politicians, and infused a spirit of patriotism into the boys and girls of the time, were not important simply because they led up to the greatest struggle of modern years, but because they afforded journalism, the pulpit, the schoolhouse, the debating societies tremendous scope for study, for investigation, for the drawing of inferences, the teaching of needed lessons, and the elevation of the entire people from the dead level of money grubbing to the higher planes of contest for free speech, free press, free men, free thought, the liberty for which the fathers suffered, bled and died.

Such times demanded leaders.

And, as in the great supernal fights, angels and archangels of light not only drew swords and gathered in mighty phalanx for the right, but angels and archangels were marshalled under the leadership of the prince of darkness, drawing their swords for determined resistance to all that was good and true and noble; so, Lincoln on the one hand, standing hand to hand, shoulder to shoulder with the other great names famous in the army of the just, Seward, Chase, Beecher, Greeley, Raymond, Lovejoy, Wade, was opposed by men of equal brain, of as wide experience, of a common determination, and a battle was begun, the very skirmishes preceding which challenged the attention of the world and furnished heroes for the page of history.

The first clash of arms came in Illinois.

Anti-slavery men, formerly Whigs, joining hands with anti-slavery men formerly Democrats, were massed as Republicans under the leadership of Lincoln, who sought an election to the United States Senate in place of Douglas, then a senator seeking re-election, the one a recognized mouth-piece of the new party, the other brooding moribund as leader of the party in power. Being challenged by Mr. Lincoln to a joint discussion, Senator Douglas faced with his great rival a series of immense audiences in their own State. In these days of stenographic reports and universal use of the electric wire, verbatim reports of those mighty efforts, as adroit and specious in the mouth of Mr. Douglas as they were earnest, impassioned and genuine in that of Mr. Lincoln, would appear in every significant paper. As it was, even in that far-away period, so great was the interest throughout the nation that the metropolitan papers sent correspondents to follow the speakers from point to point, and to reproduce, in general terms, the arguments uttered by both. A bold and significant utterance by Mr. Lincoln at that time would seem to be evidence of his prophetic genius. Said he: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I don't expect the house to be dissolved, I don't expect the house to fall, but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all the one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

The contest was nip and tuck.

Douglas, known as the Little Giant, was a powerful debater, and had spent his life on the stump and in public service. He had every change upon his finger's end. He understood the flights of oratory and the tricks of rhetoric. He was personally acquainted with nearly every man in the State, his popularity was unbounded, and he was every where conceded to be a master mind. Mr. Lincoln had not the physical and personal advantages of his opponent, yet he was quite his match before a popular audience.

His manner was unique.

He had devoted friends.

His quick insight and intuitive perceptions enabled him to detect the weak points of his opposer, and his apparently inexhaustible fund of apposite stories and pregnant anecdotes, kept his audience in good humor from first to last. The weak point of Mr. Douglass was that he was on the wrong side, and Lincoln's greatest strength was found in the fact that the principle he contended for was deep-seated in the heart of every true American, the men he talked before being of that stamp. The interest felt in the debate was national, and, although the Legislature returned was

of the complexion that re-elected Douglass to the Senate, the issue of the campaign placed Abraham Lincoln far in the forefront of the thinkers, as well as of the speakers of that time, when great thinkers lived and great orators talked. Lincoln knowing very well that Douglas cared at the time more for his momentary triumph than for the ultimate supremacy of his cause, a traitly pushed him inch by inch, until, in Freeport, Ill., he cornered him by asking whether the people of a Territory could, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State constitution. Douglas replied that slavery could of course be excluded by unfriendly territorial legislation, whereupon Lincoln rejoined, "Judge Douglas would seem to hold that a thing may lawfully be driven away from a place where it has a lawful right to go." The momentary effect of that was great, but two years later, when what is known as the secession convention assembled in Charleston, and when the delegates from the nation were in hot debate as to which of the two, Jefferson Davis or Stephen A. Douglas, should be their banner carrier, the argument was used with great effect that "Mr. Douglas said in his Freeport speech that slavery might lawfully be excluded from any Territory by unfriendly territorial legislation."

The Republican party was new.

And like all new organizations the Republican party was in danger of being over-governed. It contained many elements bitterly hostile to each other, although united on one point of common interest—the non-extension of slavery beyond its existing bounds. In the first place, there were the original Abolitionists, who, as their name implied, fought for the destruction of slavery, pure and simple, wherever it existed, as contrary to the law of God and opposed to the honor of mankind. Then there were the Whigs with their peculiar notions, and the Democrats with theirs, and a great body of non-political thinkers, moralists they might be called, and each wing or section of the party had its peculiar leaders, favorites and candidates for promotion. Mr. Lincoln was known then simply as a Western man who had met Douglas on the field and contested the championship with him. He was invited East, and among other places he spoke in Cooper Institute, in New York, in February, 1860, taking as his text the unbroken record of the founders of the republic in favor of the restriction of slavery, and against its extension. That speech clinched the favor in which he was already held by thinking men, and went far toward the compromise made upon him in the Chicago convention a few weeks later.

COTON CLOUSE - 6.27-1888



## LINCOLN'S QUESTION.

It Stilled the Storm of Applause For His Opponent, Douglas.

Professor James T. McLeary of Mankato, Minn., who for fourteen years represented a district of his state in congress, told this Lincoln story: 1511

"A friend of mine told me that when a boy he attended with his father one of the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates in Illinois. My friend's father was a Lincoln man, but the place in which that particular debate took place was a Douglas stronghold.

"Douglas spoke first, and he was frequently interrupted by vociferous applause. The cheering and the hand-clapping at the end lasted four or five minutes. When Lincoln was introduced the crowd broke out into cheers for Douglas and kept it up for several minutes. Lincoln meanwhile waited patiently.

"When at length the enthusiasm had subsided Lincoln extended his long right arm for silence. When he had partly got this he said in an impressive tone, 'What an orator Judge Douglas is!'

"This unexpected tribute to their friend set the audience wild with enthusiasm. When this applause had run its course Lincoln, extending his hand again, this time obtained silence more easily.

"What a fine presence Judge Douglas has!" exclaimed the speaker earnestly. Again tumultuous applause followed the tribute.

"How well rounded his sentences are! How well chosen his language is! How apt his illustrations are!" ending up with, 'What a splendid man Judge Douglas is!'

"Then when the audience had again become silent at his call Lincoln leaned forward and said:

"And now, my countrymen, how many of you can tell me one thing Judge Douglas said?"

"My friend told me he searched his own heart for an answer and found none. Afterward he asked his father if he could remember anything Judge Douglas had said, and the latter remembered practically nothing. 'But,' my friend said to me impressively, 'even now, half a century later, I can recall practically all that Lincoln said.'"—Exchange.

## LINCOLN AND TRUMBULL.

Gen. Shields, whose term as United States Senator was about to expire, had voted, under the influence of Senator Douglas, for the Kansas-Nebraska bill, of which the latter was the author. On the return of Douglas to Illinois after the passage of that bill he encountered the ill-feeling and indignation of vast numbers of people. Douglas attempted to vindicate his position on the rostrum. Lincoln having been the leader of the Whig party, and at that time the leader of all who opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the Kansas outrages, was brought forward for the Senate in place of Shields, and made several speeches in reply to Douglas. The Free-soil Democrats, the Whigs and the Liberty party men were united and carried a majority of the Legislature. Lincoln was the choice of a large majority of the anti-Nebraska members, and would have been elected but for the fact that among the Senators who had been elected as Democrats were four men who would not vote for a Whig, and they united on Lyman Trumbull as their candidate. If this programme could have been carried out there was great likelihood of the election of Gov. Matteson, a Democrat, and Mr. Lincoln, appreciating this, withdrew his name as a candidate, and personally persuaded his followers to vote for Trumbull, which secured his election.

## LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS. 1850

In less than five years from this time Illinois was again thrown into the greatest political excitement, and Lincoln, having been nominated by the Republican State Convention held in Springfield in June, 1858, as the candidate of that party for the Senate, again took the stump, with the able Senator Douglas, whose senatorial term was about to expire, as his adversary. The State was canvassed from one end to the other, seven joint debates being had. The great political parties throughout the country paid the closest attention to these debates, and the movement of the giants was watched with the greatest solicitude. While all the public questions of the day were discussed, the slavery question was considered by each as the vital one. The Lincoln-Douglas debates have passed into history, and stand side by side with the famous historical debate between Webster and Hayne in the United States Senate. It is unnecessary, therefore, to recite the details. Two men were never more alike and more different than Douglas and Lincoln. Physically they were contrasts; Douglas short in stature and stout, Lincoln tall and slim. Mentally both were giants. The campaign ended, and an unusually large vote was polled—Lincoln receiving 126,084 votes, and Douglas 121,940. Several Democratic State Senators in districts which gave Republican majorities holding over, and there being an inequality of the apportionment, made on the basis of the population of 1850, Douglas was re-elected to the Senate. Lincoln was defeated, but inside of three years from the time was nominated and afterwards elected to the highest office in the gift of the American people, from which his lifeless body was returned to his adopted city amid the lamentations and mourning of millions of people.

## Lincoln-Douglas Debate.

Mr. Robert R. Hitt, late assistant secretary of state, who has just been nominated for congress in the Sixth Illinois district, was Mr. Lincoln's stenographer during the famous Lincoln-Douglas joint debate in 1858. On one occasion, when an enormous crowd had assembled in the open air at Freeport, Ill., and the moment for Mr. Lincoln to begin his speech had arrived, the young stenographer was missing. The future president moved uneasily in his chair on the platform, peered eagerly about the platform and through the crowd, and finally arose. There was a hush of expectancy, but instead of beginning his speech, Mr. Lincoln called out: "Where's Hitt? Does anybody know where Hitt is?" to the great astonishment of those who did not understand the dilemma and to the amusement of those who did. Five minutes afterward Hitt arrived breathless and abashed, and the speech began.—Aug. 10, 1882.

## A LINCOLN-DOUGLAS STORY.

2. 11. 1905

St. Louis Globe-Democrat: While there were only seven joint debates of formal character under the challenge, there were other occasions when Douglas and Lincoln filled appointments so close together as to afford the excitement of personal passages. Lincoln was anxious to get before the democratic supporters of Douglas. He did not shun, but rather sought opportunities to follow Douglas as closely as he could. At Havana Douglas and Lincoln spoke the same day, in 1858. This was not one of the joint debates, but Lincoln in the afternoon answered what Douglas had said in the forenoon. Lyman Lacey, sr., describes the two meetings. Lincoln avoided being present at the meetings of Douglas. He arrived in Havana just before his afternoon appointment, but there were friends who outlined to him the speech of Douglas in the forenoon.

"Douglas," said Mr. Lacey, "tried to kill Lincoln with faint praise. Referring to his opponent at the morning meeting, Douglas said: 'Mr. Lincoln is a very nice man, very sociable and entertaining. He makes a very pleasant companion. I used to know him when he lived in Old Salem, in Menard county, when he kept store and sold whisky to his customers.' Douglas never referred to Lincoln as a great lawyer or as a man of ability.

"At the afternoon meeting Lincoln spoke of Mr. Douglas personally and said he had been informed of the tribute of praise Mr. Douglas had bestowed upon him. 'Mr. Douglas,' he said, 'has seen fit to give me praise in his speech, for which I am thankful. I am like the Hoosier with the gingerbread, who said he liked it better than any other man did, but got less of it. As to what Mr. Douglas said about his acquaintance with me in Old Salem, that I kept store, attended bar and sold whisky, all I have to say is that while I practiced at the bar on the inside, Judge Douglas practiced on the outside of the bar.'

"This created great applause from Mr. Lincoln's audience. I have always remembered this debate. A few days ago I had a conversation with Kay Watkins, of Menard county, who knew Lincoln in those days, and was at the speeches I have referred to; he remembered it as I have stated."

## Douglass' Compliment to Lincoln.

Fred Douglass, with all his long experience, never could entirely rid himself of stage fright. "During the first fifteen minutes when I front an audience," he said, "my knees will knock together." But when he got fairly going this not uncommon nervousness, which all speakers have sometimes felt, would pass away. He puts his points well in any argument, and his eloquence was of a high order. His tribute, in one sentence, to Abraham Lincoln, is an unsurpassed compliment. "Mr. Lincoln," he said, "is the only white man into whose presence I was ever ushered who did not make me feel that I was a negro."—Harper's Magazine.

1858

J WRIGHT

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**Lincoln on the Rights of the Races.**

*To the Editor of The New York Times:*

On this, the centenary of Abraham Lincoln's birthday, it cannot be amiss to recall his deliberate opinion as to the political and social equality between the white and the black race. Of the countless speeches delivered on this occasion, not one discovers an acquaintance with the most remarkable utterance of its immortal author. Here it is:

I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black race. There is a physical difference between the two which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon a footing of perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superiority. I have never said anything to the contrary; but I hold, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. (Abraham Lincoln, in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, p. 75. 2 Rhodee's History of the United States, p. 323.)

ROGER A. PRYOR.

New York, Feb. 12, 1909.

SENATOR  
Lincoln's Great Debate With Stephen  
A. Douglas.

When United States Senator Stephen A. Douglas was renominated in 1858 by the Democratic party of Illinois to succeed himself the slavery question was coming fairly before the country. 1858

The Republican party nominated Abraham Lincoln for senator, and then the eyes of the nation turned upon Illinois, as the struggle then initiated in this state must extend to the other states, and all knew

that they would soon be compelled themselves to pass upon the questions to be decided in Illinois.

None doubted that the principles of "popular sovereignty" would be thoroughly examined, for the reputation of the two combatants as men of extraordinary ability was established. Both of the contestants made speeches in Chicago, Springfield and other points in the state, and then Mr. Lincoln addressed a letter to Douglas, challenging him to a series of debates during the campaign.

The challenge was accepted, and seven joint debates were held, as follows: At Ottawa, Aug. 21; at Freeport, Aug. 27; at Jonesboro, Sept. 15; at Charlestown, Sept. 18; at Galesburg, Oct 7; at Quincy, Oct. 13; at Alton, Oct. 15.

These seven tournaments raised the greatest excitement throughout Illinois. They were held in widely separated parts of the state, from Freeport in the extreme north to Jonesboro, the most southern.

While Mr. Douglas fully sustained his previous reputation as an orator, the novelty and freshness of Mr. Lincoln's addresses, the homeliness and force of his illustrations, their wonderful pertinence, his exhaustless humor, his confidence in his own resources, won him friends everywhere.

In the election, which took place in November, the popular vote stood as follows.

Republican	.....126,084
Douglas Democrat	.....121,940
Lecompton Democrat	.....5,091

Mr. Lincoln, therefore, had the people been permitted to decide the question directly, would have been elected to the senate, since he had a plurality of 4,144 votes over Mr. Douglas. The Democratic party being in control of both branches of the state legislature returned Mr. Douglas to the senate.



## THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE.

The story is told by practically all of Lincoln's biographers that he had a far sighted vision of 1860 when, on entering upon his joint debates with Douglas, he began to press the little giant on the application of his "squatter sovereignty" theory to the Dred Scott decision. The reader of the debates will incline to the opinion that this was a matter of hind sight rather than of foresight.

Nowhere in the debates does Lincoln show that he attached any remote consequences to this particular feature of the discussion, nor does it appear that Douglas had any hesitation about standing by the peculiar brand of popular sovereignty he prided himself on having originated. Lincoln pressed Douglas on the effect of the Dred Scott decision on his pet theory because that was the weak point in the Douglas armor, and in that debate Lincoln was placed where if he had a good point on Douglas it behooved him to stick to it.

Lincoln was on the defensive in the debate for many reasons. Illinois to begin with was half northern and half southern in sympathy. And of the northern part, while opposition to the extension of slavery was pronounced there was but little sympathy with extreme abolitionism. Lincoln was in a place where he must hold the support of Lovejoy without losing the support of men who regarded Lovejoy as a fanatic. And while doing this he was compelled to attack a decision of the supreme court of the United States, a thing not easy to do against an experienced debater like Douglas. There was one further embarrassment, Lincoln had within a short time abandoned the old whigs, and had joined with Lyman Trumbull, who had deserted the old democrats, in organizing the republican party. Douglas did not fail in the old whig strongholds to magnify the enormity of this desertion.

Douglas opened the debate by quoting some extreme abolition resolutions adopted in the formation of the republican party in Illinois and asked Lincoln categorically if they voiced his sentiments. If Lincoln had not been a most adroit debater he could not have escaped the first onslaught. Lincoln parried by showing that the resolutions were not adopted at the meeting at which Douglas had alleged, and in the end showed that the Douglas men had taken two sets of resolutions and patched them together, charging them with forgery. In that way he escaped.

Douglas then took the "house divided against itself" speech Lincoln had made at Springfield when he accepted the commission to run against Douglas, in which he had said: "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the union to be dissolved, I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect to see it cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." Douglas insisted that if this meant anything it meant an aggressive policy of extermination of slavery in the southern states, and as this was particularly unpopular with the north at that time, which demanded only that slavery be kept where it was, Lincoln was compelled to explain himself in every speech. The extent of his embarrassment was shown in his remark that he "expected" to die but was not wishing or planning to die.

And so on through the debate. Douglas rang the changes on Lincoln's refusal to accept the decision of the highest tribunal on earth in the Dred Scott decision. He accused Lincoln of being strongly for negro equality in the northern counties and quite certain that the negro was inferior in the southern counties; charged him up with every extreme statement of abolitionism that had been uttered and took advantage of every possible means to embarrass a speaker who had to carefully pick his way between two extremes. No man can read the Douglas speeches without renewed admiration for the skill and vigor with which the little giant pressed his advantage.

All of which makes it apparent that there was but one thing for Lincoln to do, and that was to show that the Dred Scott decision gave the slave holder the right to take his slaves into every northern territory and so put Douglas on the defensive. For Douglas' popular sovereignty theory was that every territory should decide for itself whether to have slaves or not within its borders. This forced Douglas to stand by his guns, to the point of breaking with the slave holding democracy, for Douglas could not drop his popular sovereignty if he would, and he could not drop it without at once losing Illinois.

It is true that the south had hailed the Dred Scott decision with glee because it permitted slave holders to invade Kansas and Nebraska, and it is true that Douglas broke with the south when he insisted that these territories could by legislation practically annul the supreme court de-

cision. It is true that Lincoln saw the situation for in one of the last debates, at Galesburg, he said: "Whatever may be the result of this ephemeral contest between Judge Douglas and myself, I see the day rapidly approaching when his pill of sectionalism, which he has been thrusting down the throats of republicans for years past, will be crowded down his own throat." But it does not appear elsewhere in the debates that Lincoln attached very much importance to the ditch he was digging for Douglas and the northern democrats in so far as it might affect their future relations with the south.

Lincoln won in the debate, not because he was more adroit than Douglas or more ready, although he was a match for Douglas on the stump. He won because he insisted on being understood and because he stuck to the one point that the north would not submit to an extension of slave territory above Mason and Dixon's line, which was the point at which all northern anti-slavery sentiment came together. The Dred Scott decision which permitted the holding of slaves in every territory, and by inference in every state, had alarmed the north, and Lincoln held to his text. Because he did not drift into abolition on the one side, nor permit Douglas to force him to disavow his repugnance to slavery on the other, he was nominated at Chicago for the presidency. He made himself in that debate the spokesman of all phases of anti-slavery sentiment, the one man upon whom the north could unite. *Chas. Briggs & Leach*  
2-3-09

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said: "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect

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It is true that the south had hailed the Dred Scott decision with glee because it permitted slave holders to invade Kansas and Nebraska, and it is true that Douglas broke with the south when he insisted that these territories could by legislation practically annul the supreme court decision. It is true that Lincoln saw the situation for in one of the last debates, at Galesburg, he said: "Whatever may be the result of this ephemeral contest between Judge Douglas and myself, I see the day rapidly approaching when his pill of sectionalism, which he has been thrusting down the throats of republicans for years past, will be crowded

down his own throat." But it does not appear elsewhere in the debates that Lincoln attached very much importance to the ditch he was digging for Douglas and the northern democrats in so far as it might affect their future relations with the south.

Lincoln won in the debate, not because he was more adroit than Douglas or more ready, although he was a match for Douglas on the stump. He won because he insisted on being understood and because he stuck to the one point that the north would not submit to an extension of slave territory above Mason and Dixon's line, which was the point at which all northern anti-slavery sentiment came together. The Dred Scott decision which permitted the holding of slaves in every territory, and by inference in every state, had alarmed the north, and Lincoln held to his text. Because he did not drift into abolition on the one side, nor permit Douglas to force him to disavow his repugnance to slavery on the other, he was nominated at Chicago for the presidency. He made himself in that debate the spokesman of all phases of anti-slavery sentiment, the one man upon whom the north could unite.



# Lincoln and Popular Sovereignty

By SUMNER W. HAYNES.

Born in Kentucky, raised to manhood in the extremely simple life known to the very poor of southern Indiana, developed in Illinois in the rough and tumble pioneer days, he became the statesman of the century and the man for the occasion.

With ability as a lawyer, and as an ordinary citizen, he was on a par with those with whom he associated. But in his final mission in the world he seems to have been chosen with a special fitness, that could not have been attained by any of the known men of his time.

After more than fifty years have passed since he was elevated to his high position and responsibility, to be tested as no other man was tested in all history, do we come any nearer knowing the foundation of his great strength and wisdom? When we make a diligent and careful search into his life, we find him not so remarkably different from the men of his time only in his great ability to see a distinct dividing line between right and wrong. This brought him into national prominence in the discussion of the slavery question—the one question that would not down—but was the nightmare of the trimming politician from the earliest day until its final settlement.

Recognizing the wrong of slavery to be such that it could not be overthrown at once, and just because he knew it was a great wrong, yet he was so constituted in mind and disposition—in character—that when wrong was once known to him, he would never again favor a plan or policy that would treat it as not wrong or as an indifferent thing. His mind never vacillated. To him slavery was wrong. He recognized his inability to overthrow it at certain times and in certain places, but this fact did not deceive him into favoring a policy that would treat it as not wrong, but seemed to provoke him to be more insistent that there should be a NATIONAL POLICY that would treat it as a wrong.

On this point Douglas said of him: "Mr. Lincoln thinks it is his duty to preach a crusade in the free states against slavery, because it is a crime as he believes, and ought to be extinguished, and because the people in the slave states never will abolish it."—Quincy debate.

## The "Popular Sovereignty" Act.

The act which brought about the plan and discussion of "Popular Sovereignty" as defined in the act itself, was this: "It being the true intent and meaning of this act, not to legislate slavery into any territory or STATE, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and REGULATE their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the constitution of the United States."

For six years Lincoln had lost interest in politics, as far as could be seen by the public, for he took no public part in the discussions.

This Popular Sovereignty idea aroused the dormant statesman, and for seven years he pressed with all of his moral, political and social power to counteract and overthrow the "nefarious doctrine" that any community should have the right to choose an evil thing. Such a doctrine was contrary to all the innermost conscience of his life and soul. There was no rest until the matter was finally settled.

Douglas, in advocating his policy of popular sovereignty, would say, "I do not care whether slavery is voted up or down; any community that wants slaves

can have them, any that does not want them can vote them out."

This expression seemed to exasperate Lincoln, and as far back as 1854, soon after the Nebraska Bill was passed and Douglas had made the "don't care" expression, Lincoln, in a speech at Peoria, gave voice to a list of hates. Which in my opinion, was the foundation for the list of hates uttered by a great man since, and under the influence of which he seems to have been able to reverse the position of the great church to which he belongs and to carry captive the great political party of Lincoln and tear it completely loose from its moorings that gave it the reputation of being the G. O. P.

## The Hates of Two Men.

But how different in sentiment are the "hates" of these two men. Gov. Hanly, of our day, in speaking out his hates, applies them to the creature itself, while Lincoln's hate was for the policy that makes the continuance of the evil possible. Douglas had, in language as stated above, declared his indifference as to the evil itself, and Lincoln expressed his hate for this "DECLARED INDIFFERENCE" POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY of evil. So much did Lincoln think of this list of hates that he quoted it in his first great debate with Douglas four years after he had first uttered it. I cannot refrain from quoting:

"This declared indifference I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites, causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many real good men amongst ourselves into open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty, criticising the Declaration of Independence and insisting that there is no right principle but self interest."

Those who have read the great debates will discover how Lincoln drove this idea home upon Douglas, and how adroitly the latter avoided it, with all the petty personal matters that he could remember or invent; but the logic of "Popular Sovereignty" was made clear when Douglas admitted that, under his policy of treatment, there was reason to believe the traffic would exist forever. Referring to his plan of policy, Douglas says in the Quincy debate: "If we will stand by that principle, then Mr. Lincoln will find that this republic can exist forever, divided into Free and Slave States, as our fathers made it and the people of each State have decided."

I wish I could know that you would read this debate at Quincy in its entirety. It provokes the real fire from the contending debaters. Douglas could no longer dodge the issue. But be careful how you attempt to read certain portions of it in public, at least in the public parks of our capital city. The only time I was ever arrested in my life was for reading, on the 4th of July, in Riverside Park, Indianapolis, in the woods, that portion of Lincoln's speech, beginning: "We have in this nation this element of domestic slavery. It is a matter of absolute certainty that it is a disturbing element," etc. I told my hearers, before I began to read it, to substitute Liquor Traffic for Slavery and Republican and Democratic parties for Democratic party, and Prohibition party where Republican party appeared in the speech. All went fairly well until the crowd of Prohibitionists got to cheering, then the policeman, who stood at my feet by the platform, pulled by pant leg and told me to be careful. But when I reached the point

where it said, "We think it is a moral, a social and a political wrong," and "Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with it as a wrong," the cheering became so great that I was arrested by the policeman and taken out of the park and not permitted to finish because I was talking politics!

Lincoln was defeated for the Senate in 1854 because he opposed Popular Sovereignty, and some of the good religious people held it against him even when he was chosen as the candidate for President in 1861, as is evidenced by the way they were polled to vote at that election.

## Preachers Were Against Him.

In looking over that list of votes as polled, a few days before the election he discovered that 20 out of the 23 preachers in the city of Springfield were going to vote against him. He was terribly agitated. With tears running down his face he said, among other things: "I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or down, but God cares, and humanity cares and I care; with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end; but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles aright."

A greater moral, social and political evil is with us today. For the one that is past and dead, the nation never stood sponsor. It was here in a very small way when the government was instituted and there was some plan that it should finally cease.

The awful traffic in human happiness, in human misery, in human souls that is now blighting this great nation, has its chief bulwark in the National government.

In the case of the slavery question, as opposed to Popular Sovereignty, Lincoln advocated in his speech at Cincinnati, in 1855, that "we want and must have a national policy in regard to the institution of slavery that acknowledges and deals with that institution as being wrong."

More than two hundred millions of dollars in revenue, drawn from the life blood of the people who should be protected from the curse of drink as our National government now protects us from the Asiatic cholera. RUM REVE-

NUE! Ex-Senator Edmunds told a friend of mine that whenever there was a statesman great enough to provide a plan that would bring such a certain revenue in place of that derived from the liquor traffic, then the problem would be soon settled.

But what do we have? Great men, who hate the liquor traffic with all its blight and curse and HELL, going about over the country advocating SALOON option by counties and becoming wonderfully wrought up over the G-R-E-A-T P-R-I-N-C-I-P-L-E of local self government, then going to the polls and voting men into power, and parties into power, to continue nationally to curse the people for the revenue it brings, and with the display that comes from the revenue drawn from the life blood of our people, parade our nation as one of the greatest on earth.

There is nothing in the local option policy that treats the traffic as wrong. On the contrary, there is the clearly-defined teaching in the national policy of our government, in that it makes the traffic a permanent source of revenue and protects the traffic in its commerce in every part of the whole country, that the traffic is not wrong. Lincoln saw, as we can see, that "our present moral tone and temper are strong enough for our open enemies." But when the leaders in the political life, the business life and the religious life of our country, follow and advocate a policy in dealing with this question, in the nation, that distinctly treats it as not wrong; and as a local question, treats it as having no wrong in it, what becomes of our moral tone and temper?



the good people have generally in this easy plan. They have contributed liberally to the League's expense fund and have permitted its collection agents to do the major part of their thinking along this line.

The A.-S. L. is splendidly organized—at the collection box. Its deceptive black and white maps, though transparent to the prohibition student, have served their purpose well with the audiences.

The League struck the churches a staggering blow when it supplied for partisan church members a hiding place (though very thinly disguised one), and a soothing, sleep-inducing balm for their more or less disturbed consciences.

The writer has had unusually good opportunities to learn what the great my of unchurched men think of those who profess to follow the Nazarine, talk fearfully about the woes of intemperance, pronounce curses upon the drink traffic, pray long and loudly for God's blessing on the cause of prohibition, then deliberately go to the polls and vote that the soul-destroying traffic shall go on.

"Such Christians," said an old party leader and office holder to me recently, "need never talk their religion to me. I unhesitatingly call them hypocrites." Then he added: *"To vote either the Republican or Democratic ticket is to plainly indorse the licensed liquor traffic."*

Thousands of good people are being kept out of the churches and out of the circle of Christian influence by this compromising, double-faced way of dealing with the worst enemy of society and the church.

The world not only needs Christ, but will seek and accept Him just as soon as the church gets where it belongs. O, this I will speak in a later article.

What is the Anti-Saloon League doing now? It has at least the balance of power in the politics of this state. It has fought (?) the liquor men eighteen years, and yet the latter carry the Empire—politically speaking, in their pocket.

## A Battle of Giants.

Every good American can find reading as fascinating as instructive in the lecture by HORACE WHITE upon the famous "Lincoln-Douglas Debates" as reported on the second page of this paper. For not only are those debates one of the "decisive battles" of our history but also there is no living man who can tell of them as can HORACE WHITE.

For HORACE WHITE's career as a newspaper man bridges the gap between the Lincoln of 1858 and the present day. Now retired after more than sixty years of active journalism, Mr. WHITE was from 1865 to 1874 editor-in-chief of the Chicago TRIBUNE. Removing to New York in 1877, he joined with others in purchasing the New York EVENING POST a few years later and was its editor-in-chief until his retirement a decade ago.

Mr. WHITE can tell of the Lincoln-Douglas debates as can no other living man because of the fact that as a reporter for the Chicago TRIBUNE in 1858 it fell to his lot to report for his paper the battle of the giants—ABRAHAM LINCOLN and STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS. *CHICAGO INTER-OCEAN 2-20-1914*

Every good American knows—or should know—what brought about this fateful battle of giants. The slavery question, long in abeyance and apparently sleeping, had come to the front as a vital national question through the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 through the passage of DOUGLAS' Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854 and the Dred Scott decision of 1857. The term of DOUGLAS as United States Senator being about to expire, the choice of his successor became the issue which controlled the election of the members of the Illinois Legislature in the fall of 1858. The Democratic state convention indorsed DOUGLAS; the Republican state convention declared for LINCOLN as its "first and only choice."

So, while on its face the fight was between DOUGLAS and LINCOLN for the Senatorship, the fight was really between the slavery and anti-slavery forces. This was made plain by LINCOLN's famous Springfield speech of acceptance in which occurs the immortal utterance:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

DOUGLAS answered this speech. LINCOLN in turn answered DOUGLAS and so on. Then LINCOLN challenged DOUGLAS to a series of joint debates. DOUGLAS accepted, and the battle was on, with the result of the seven debates at Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy and Alton—from Aug. 21 to Oct. 15, 1858.

The Freeport debate is most famous of the seven because it was there that LINCOLN—against the almost frantic protest of his friends and political advisers—put that fatal question to DOUGLAS:

Can the people of a United States territory, in a lawful way, against the wishes of any outside citizens, exclude slavery in their constitution?

LINCOLN's reply to his advisers was in effect that he was after bigger game than the pending senatorial election. DOUGLAS would have to answer the question. If he answered "yes" it would probably win for him the Senatorship, but his answer would beat him for the Presidency in 1860.

We all know how DOUGLAS answered. We all know how DOUGLAS beat LINCOLN for the Senatorship. And we all know how DOUGLAS' answer to LINCOLN's question did beat DOUGLAS for the Presidency, just as LINCOLN had foreseen.

Incidentally, that same question and answer also elected LINCOLN to the Presidency and saved the nation—but that is another story of which neither LINCOLN nor the nation had the slightest inkling at the time LINCOLN gave such convincing proof of his statesmanship and self-sacrificing patriotism.

# LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS RACE STATE EPOCH

## Illinois Battleground in the Contest That Made Emancipator President

See St. Louis 2-12-19

The debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, who were opposing candidates for the office of United States senator, in 1858, centered the attention of the whole country, and the world, upon Illinois. It was the old question of the extension of slavery upon which these two great statesmen went before the people to present their claims for the high honor to which both aspired.

For years this question had been threatening trouble for the nation every time a new state had been admitted to the Union. The politicians of the slaveholding states wished to extend slavery into as many of the new states as possible, in order that they might not lose control of congress and thus prevent any legislation against their interest.

### Missouri Admitted.

Missouri had been admitted to the Union as a slave state, in 1820, under an act known as the "Missouri Compromise, presented in congress

by Jesse B. Thomas, a senator from Illinois, and which prohibited slavery in all states that might thereafter be formed out of the territory ceded by France under the Louisiana purchase of 1803, north of the line drawn east and west which forms the boundary between Missouri and Arkansas. This made more trouble when California was admitted to the Union as a free state in 1850, and in 1854 the fight began again when Stephen A. Douglas presented a bill in congress organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. This bill repealed the Missouri Compromise by providing that the people of these territories might decide for themselves whether or not they should have slaves. This bill passed, and so the fight between the pro-slavery and the anti-slavery factions became hotter than ever. So angry were the anti-slavery people of Illinois that when Douglas returned to Illinois and attempted make a speech defending his course, at Chicago, he found himself facing a howling mob that for four hours drowned his voice with yells and hoots and all kinds of insulting actions. Douglas faced them with unflinching courage and continued to speak, though never a word of his speech was heard.

### New Party Born.

Such was the state of feeling that existed and which resulted in the formation of a new political party in Illinois known as the Republican party. Formed of men who were opposed to the further spread of slavery. Among the leaders of the new party in Illinois were Abraham Lincoln, O. H. Browning, John M. Palmer, Richard Yates, Owen Lovejoy, Lyman Trumbull, Richard J. Oglesby and others. In 1856 this party was strong enough to elect William S. Bissell as governor, and all the rest of the state officers. Thus Illinois became the battleground of the great political contest which resulted, as afterward appeared, in the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency, the secession of the southern states, the great Civil war, and the final freedom of the slaves.



# The Lincoln-Douglas Debates



Abraham Lincoln



Stephen A. Douglas

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

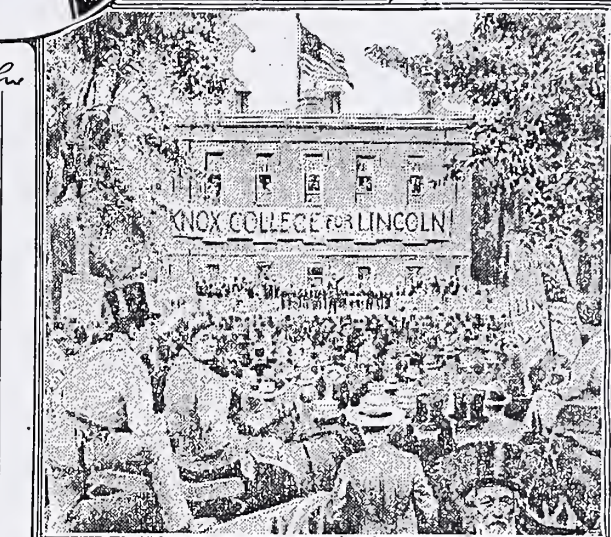
**B**ECAUSE of the radio, it will be possible for millions of Americans during the next two and one-half months to listen to Herbert C. Hoover and Alfred E. Smith discuss the issues in the 1928 Presidential campaign. But it is doubtful if the contest this year, for all the millions who will hear its various issues debated, will excite the intense interest and have the far-reaching results in our history that a senatorial campaign in Illinois did just 70 years ago this summer. For it was during that campaign that there took place the now-famous series of "Lincoln-Douglas Debates," held in seven Illinois cities in August, September and October, 1858, one of the most picturesque and important incidents in all American political history.

The opponents for the office of United States senator from Illinois were Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. Douglas was the Democratic incumbent, seeking re-election. At the age of forty-five he was a national figure, having served three terms in the house of representatives and 12 years in the senate. Only five feet, two inches tall, he was known as the "Little Giant," a man of great personal charm, with his clarion voice, his dominating way of tossing his mane of curly black hair, his Napoleonic frown and his gift of oratory, inherited from the school of Daniel Webster and Henry Clay. He had been a poor boy on a New England farm, working his way up by his own indomitable effort to a position of wealth and great influence. He was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska bill which had reopened the old slavery dispute after it had apparently been settled by the Compromise of 1820 and 1850, and this measure, which had an appeal to both northern and southern Democrats, he fondly hoped would make him the Democrats' next candidate for the Presidency.

His Republican opponent, Abraham Lincoln, apparently lacked everything which Douglas had to make him a popular and appealing public figure. At the age of forty-nine, he was a tall, gaunt, awkward-looking country lawyer, who had been a popular enough political speaker to have served in the Illinois legislature and one term in congress. But he was virtually unknown outside the borders of his own state and even two years later a New York paper was referring to him as "a third-rate western lawyer . . . who cannot speak good grammar." Against the advice of Seward and Greeley, the sages in the newly-formed Republican party, the Illinois Republicans had nominated him for senator against Douglas.

When he accepted the nomination in a speech at Springfield, he threw something of a bombshell into his own political camp when, against the advice of his conservative friends, he declared:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and



THE MEETING AT GALESBURG (from Ida Tarbell's 'Life of Lincoln')

place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become lawful alike in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South."

As the campaign progressed Lincoln began to trail Douglas, whose supporters with their bands and torchlight processions in the leading cities of the state were making a powerful impression upon the electorate. Incidentally, Douglas had another powerful ally in his beautiful young wife, a grandniece of Dolly Madison, whose "mere presence gained votes for her husband." Sometimes at the end of a Douglas meeting Lincoln would rise and announce when and where he would make his reply. Sometimes dodgers of the Lincoln meeting would be handed out to the Douglas crowd as it dispersed.

Finally Lincoln decided to challenge Douglas to a joint debate and on July 24, 1858, he wrote a note from Chicago to Douglas suggesting that they divide the time and address the same audiences during the campaign. Douglas did not want to debate with Lincoln, for, from the speeches Lincoln had already made in reply to his, he realized the strength of "Honest Abe's" logic. But to refuse might lose the election, so he agreed. Nor did Lincoln's friends view the idea with any particular enthusiasm. True, Lincoln had met and skillfully refuted all of Douglas' arguments, but they were fearful that in a joint debate in which the voters would have a chance to see the two men side by side their candidate would show to his poor advantage when compared to the brilliant Douglas.

However, the arrangements were made, according to Douglas' terms, for seven debates, one in each of the seven congressional districts. Douglas was to speak one hour at the first, Lincoln to reply for an hour and a half and Douglas to close with a half-hour rebuttal. At the second Lincoln was to have the opening and closing speeches and so on alternately and although this arrangement gave Douglas the advantage of four openings and closings to Lincoln's three, Lincoln agreed to the terms, for as he said humorously, "My consenting to it was not wholly unselfish, for I suspected, if it were understood that the judge was entirely done, you Democrats would leave and not hear me;

but by giving him the close, I felt confident you would stay for the fun of hearing him skin me."

The debates were held as follows: Ottawa, LaSalle county, August 21, 1858; Freeport, Stephenson county, August 27; Jonesboro, Union county, September 15; Charleston, Coles county, September 18; Galesburg, Knox county, October 7; Quincy, Adams county, October 13, and Alton, Madison county, October 15.

As the debates progressed it soon became apparent how groundless were the fears of Lincoln's friends that he could not hold his own with the "Little Giant." The humor which had made "Honest Abe" such a favorite when he was riding the circuit was used time and again with telling effect against his opponent. On one occasion, after Douglas had thrilled and swayed his audience with his oratory and sat down amid a storm of applause, Lincoln rose, and drawing himself to his full height, slowly took off his coat, a gesture which in the pioneer settlements meant business. Handing it to some of his friends, he said, "Here, boys! Hold my raiment while I go in and stone Stephen!" Amid a gale of laughter from those people who knew their Bible, he did "stone Stephen"—with facts!

Long before the debates were over it was apparent to all who heard them that for once Douglas had met his match. Through all the windings and turnings of the debates, there shone forth the fundamental fact that Douglas was the disciple of expediency and of "trimming" and that Lincoln was the exponent of protest against wrong and the proponent of the right. At the second debate, the one at Freeport, Douglas sealed his political fate. Lincoln forced Douglas to quibble on the effect of the Dred Scott decision and the South labeled him a "double-dealer" whom it could not trust. Although Douglas eventually won the election to the senate, he had killed his chances for the Presidency in 1860. Lincoln had lost the lesser prize in 1858, but he won the greater one two years later. One of the things which helped him do it was his part in the historic Lincoln-Douglas debates, which led some to prophesy even then that they had "sounded the death knell of slavery and paved the way for the election of Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States."







# Lincoln-Douglas Debate Greatest in Our History

Lincoln first attracted national attention in the Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858. Concerning this debate a writer who heard it says: "Both with reference to the ability of the speakers and its influence upon opinion and events, it was unquestionably the most important in American history; that the speeches of Lincoln, published, circulated and read throughout the free states, did more than any other agency in creating public opinion which prepared the way for the overthrow of slavery." It was in speeches in that debate that Lincoln made frequent use of the declaration that "a house divided against itself shall not stand," a declaration that is both scriptural and self-evident in the application made by Lincoln: "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it becomes alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, north as well as south." The position of Douglas on the question of slavery was one of indifference. In his speeches he severely criticized the declaration of Lincoln and his application of a "house divided against itself." Douglas advocated with all his power the doctrine of "popular sovereignty"—a proposition which, as quaintly put by Lincoln, meant that "If one man chooses to enslave another no third man has a right to object."

## Both Giants in Intellect.

At the time of this memorable discussion both Lincoln and Douglas were in the full maturity of their powers, says a writer in the Indianapolis News, Douglas being at the age of forty-five years and Lincoln four years his senior. Douglas had long been recognized as an able and popular speaker. In congress and in the United States senate he had been accustomed to meet the ablest debaters of the state and nation. His friends insisted that never, either in conflict with a single opponent, or when repelling the assaults of a whole party had he ever been discomfited. His manner was bold, vigorous and aggressive. He was ready and fluent in language, elegant in diction, fertile in resources and especially familiar with political history. Lincoln was at that time a trained speaker, having contended successfully at the bar, in the legislature and in the congress, and before the people with the ablest men of the West—including Douglas, with whom he always rather sought than avoided a discussion.

Such were the champions who engaged in that famous discussion before the people of Illinois, with the whole nation as spectators and audience, the political questions then pending—especially the vital question relating to slavery. It was not a single combat, but extended through a whole campaign. The meetings were held in the open air, for no hall was large enough to accommodate the immense crowds that assembled at each place to hear the discussion. The speeches were published in all the principal newspapers of the country and were eagerly read by a majority of the voters in the United States. The attention of the people was thus arrested and the whole nation was aroused on this one vital question of the day as it had never been before.

Douglas secured the immediate object of the contest in retaining his seat in the United States senate; but the vigorous logic, the honesty and sincerity and the great intellectual powers exhibited by Lincoln prepared the way for his nomination and election to the Presidency two years later—which was really the goal of Douglas' ambition and the ultimate object of the Lincoln-Douglas debate.

## Douglas' Patriotism.

It is a touching incident and happily illustrates the patriotism that inspired both of these statesmen, widely as they differed in political policy and keen as had been their rivalry, just as soon as the life of the republic was

—the man who accompanied him and who stood close by his side, the man who was the first to take his hand and pledge his unqualified support in the great task Lincoln had assumed as President of a distracted country, was Senator Stephen A. Douglas. Unfortunately for the country, Douglas died a few months later—June 3, 1861—and the cause of the Union and support of the administration was deprived of his great influence.

In response to invitations Lincoln visited the cities of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and other places in the East on his journey from Springfield to Washington—a journey that occupied about ten days, marked by official receptions and great crowds of people anxious to see and hear the man upon whom the destinies of the country depended. Every word of the President-elect on this journey was carefully scanned for some light by which to read the troubled and uncertain future. Measuring his words with unusual caution, he avoided any announcement of policy, but the country was nevertheless able to read between the lines that it had made no mistake in the man to whom it had confided the preservation of the government.

## Pathetic Leave Taking.

Nothing in the history of Lincoln is more pathetic than the scene of his departure from Springfield on the morning of February 11, 1861, when he bade farewell to his old friends and neighbors. The scene is thus described by Lincoln's biographer:

"A throng of at least a thousand of Lincoln's friends and neighbors had gathered at the dingy little railroad station at Springfield to bid him goodbye. It was a cloudy, stormy morn-

ing, which served to add gloom and depression to their spirits. The leave taking became a scene of subdued anxiety, almost of solemnity. Mr. Lincoln took a position in the waiting room where his friends filed past him often merely pressing his hand in silent emotion. The half-finished ceremony was broken by the ringing bell and rushing train. The crowd closed about the railroad car into which the President-elect and his party had entered. Then came the central incident of the morning. Once more the bell gave notice of starting, but the conductor paused with his hand lifted to the bell rope. Mr. Lincoln appeared on the platform of the car and raised his hand to command attention. The bystanders bared their heads to the falling snowflakes and standing thus his neighbors heard his voice for the last time in the city of his home."

## May Have Foreseen Fate.

Lincoln's farewell address to his Springfield neighbors is expressed in words so chaste and pathetic that it reads as if he already felt the tragic shadow of forecasting fate. "No one," he said, "can realize the sadness I feel at this parting. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return. I go to assume a task more difficult than any that has devolved upon any chief executive since Washington.

## HODGENVILLE STATUE



Work of the Well-Known New York Sculptor, Adolph Weinman.

menaced they joined hands to shield and save the country they both loved. When Abraham Lincoln walked out to the east steps of the capitol to deliver his inaugural address and take the oath of office as President of the United States—facing a great crowd of people, among whom were many who would gladly have taken his life



Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him I cannot succeed—with that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will be well. To His care I commend you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me. I bid you an affectionate farewell." And as he waved his hand in farewell to the old home, to which he was never to return, the fervent response from many of his old friends: "God bless and keep you; God protect you." They were "sorrowing most of all for the words he spake," impressed with a feeling that they would see his face no more.

## LINCOLN, DOUGLAS, OGLESBY MATTER

*Compiled by HERBERT WELLS FAY, Custodian Lincoln Tomb*

Douglas and Oglesby were so prominently identified with Lincoln that anything about them attracts the interest of collectors.

"State of Illinois, Executive Department, Springfield, June 15.

"To the People of Illinois:

"Our soldiers are returning home in large numbers, by regiments, companies and detachments, after years of arduous and faithful service, to be finally mustered out and honorably discharged from the service of the United States. The camps near Springfield and Chicago have been designated as the points of rendezvous for this purpose. The troops will arrive at these camps by rail from the East and South, passing through the state, by day and night, for several weeks. Several regiments have arrived, and from these points, as they are discharged, they will separate, in every direction to every part of the state, soldiers no longer, but citizens again, when they will settle to enjoy with us the peace they have given the country and the honors they have won.

"Let us meet them, fellow citizens, as our hearts dictate we should, with open arms, with joyful shouts, with warm affection. Spread the best the state affords, with luxuries such as women alone can prepare; and above all, let us meet them as the defenders of our liberties and the saviors of our country. Turn from every employment long enough to tender these brave men these hospitalities. Their thinned ranks and battered flags, their bronzed faces, and steady, firm step, show what their strong arms and stout hearts have done for us. Turn out, all Illinois, to welcome your noble sons, as such a state can afford to do. Show them by your recognition how they have earned your lasting gratitude, and when the days of welcome shall be passed you will see that a good soldier knows how to make a good citizen.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto

set my hand, and have caused the great seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed, this 15th day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five.

"(Signed) RICHARD J. OGLESBY.

"By the Governor.

"SHARON TYNDALE,

"Secretary of State."

One of the treasured medallions of Lincoln was presented in 1866 to Mrs. Abraham Lincoln by 40,000 French people, who contributed two sons each.

Napoleon III, adverse to this movement, would not allow it to be struck in France, so it was cast in Switzerland, but it was presented from Paris, October 13, 1866. On one side of the medallion is a likeness of Mr. Lincoln, with the inscription, "Dedie par la Democratie Francaise A. Lincoln, President deux fois elu des etats Unis."

On the reverse, Victory stands with anchor and wreath. Two freemen, one pointing to the American eagle, the other is placing a palm branch on the altar

A reproduction of this Lincoln treasure in bronze is printed in Oldroyd's Memorial Album, page 77. One of the original medallions, three inches in diameter, was loaned the writer many years ago by an internationally famed collector, subject to call, but in case of his death it was to become as he said "A part of the Fay collection." This collector passed to his reward several years ago.

Frank E. Stevens in his life of Douglas on page 629, reproduces the manuscript in Douglas hand as follows:

"April 18, 1861, Senator Douglas called on the President, and had an interesting conversation, on the present condition of the country. The substance of it was, on the part of Mr. Douglas, that while he was unalterably opposed to the administration in all its political issues, he was prepared to fully sustain the President, in the exercise of all his constitu-

Sharon

## WEEK BY WEEK

tional functions, to preserve the Union, maintain the government, and defend the federal capital. A firm policy and prompt action was necessary. The capital was in danger, and must be defended at all hazards and at any expense of men and money. He spoke of the present and future without any reference of the past."

Douglas told William C. Goudy, a fellow attorney, that Lincoln was the most difficult and dangerous opponent that he had ever met.

Edward Everett Hale is authority, as quoted in Stevens' Life of Douglas, page 670, for the following statement:

"When upon sending his son Robert to Harvard, Lincoln desired for the son attentions which might not come to the average young western man, how did Lincoln secure that coveted attention? By securing from his old friend Senator Douglas, a letter to the president of Harvard, Dr. Walker, and therein he speaks of the young man as the son of his friend, Abraham Lincoln, 'with whom I have lately been canvassing the State of Illinois.'"

The prevailing opinion is that as Lincoln and Douglas had engaged in a political struggle that was heralded around the world, that they were personal enemies. The cause was of such magnitude, that each sought every advantage known to orator's art.

Sometimes bitter personalities found their way into the record. They were men of mighty minds. They entered the conflict as do the attorneys who represent their clients in a case of life and death. Bitterness and even personalities may prevail but after the case has gone to the jury, they arm in arm go out to lunch. Lincoln and Douglas each recognized the abilities of the other.

When Lincoln was about to take the oath of office, with one hand on Holy Writ and the other lifted toward heaven, Douglas stepped forward accepted Lincoln's tall silk hat and no act of his life more dramatically showed his true American spirit and greatness.

Douglas' greatest claim for world fame is that he brought out and made Lincoln and that is honor enough for any man,



# RECENTLY FOUND SHOW HOW LINCOLN STUDIED FOR DEBATES WITH DOUGLAS

## Constant Search for the Little Brown Books Has Ended With Success Almost on the 125th Anniversary of the President's Birth.

By WILLIAM S. ODLIN

Special to the BUFFALO EVENING NEWS.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12. — Just prior to the 125th anniversary of his birth, there reached the national capital, scene of his triumph and martyrdom, two of the most significant memorabilia of Abraham Lincoln yet unearthed in the endless search which has been prosecuted ever since his death.

They are two little brown books which look as though they might have been fished out of the penny box of a second-hand bookstall but they happen to contain the meat upon which the Emancipator fed when he was training for the great turning point of his career. They are the scrapbooks with which he primed himself for his titanic debates with Stephen A. Douglas.

Until a few weeks ago the very existence of these priceless objects was unknown and even unsuspected. They were at last discovered in a mass of Lincoln papers gathered for but not used in the famous Herndon biography. Their outstanding historic importance recognized, they were promptly insured against loss or theft and Emanuel Hertz, biographer of Lincoln, personally carried them from New York to Washington. There he placed them in the custody of Henry T. Rainey, speaker of the House with the suggestion that they be shown to President Roosevelt.

### INSIGHT GIVEN

Insignificant of material aspect but redolent of the stirring times which gave them birth, the two little books reveal a new and striking insight into the mental habits of Lincoln and thus are destined to preoccupy historians for many a day. They also disclose Lincoln as an assiduous reader of newspapers for their contents are almost entirely brief clippings from the press of the 1850's, selected with meticulous weighing of the potential value of the hoarded words. They are, in a word, just scrapbooks, but not the ponderous kind which must repose useless for the most part on a shelf, but the highly mobile, intimate little volumes one may carry in one's pocket to study and digest at odd moments wherever one may be.

Each of the books is about 2½x5 inches. The first has "Ledger" embossed in gold upon its cover, while the second is perfectly plain but has a brass "Bible" clasp and is still enclosed in an open end box cover which Lincoln took care never to lose.

The clippings are all carefully trimmed, neatly pasted to the pages and systematically indexed. The written name of Lincoln appears nowhere on or on either volume but even a schoolboy familiar with the uniform mall and quite legible hand which Lincoln always wrote could not mistake the indexer.

### CONTENTS REVEALED

What, then, are the contents of the treasure books which Lincoln made small enough to have always with him as he prepared for the crucial test that was to turn him toward the White House to become the preserver of the Union?

The books covered a period of about two years, starting in 1856 and while the bulk of the contents, of course, deals with the issue of slavery, there are many bits of miscellaneous information Lincoln noticed in the newspapers and which he thought might prove useful to him at some time. Among such items are these:

A table of the solar system, distances between large cities, the popular vote for President in 1844, 1848, 1852 and 1856, dimensions of American lakes, population of the world estimated in 1854 at 1,150,000,000, coin and bullion in the United States, status of the "magnetic telegraph" in 1857, tables on emigration, bank statistics of 1858, mercantile insolvencies, progress of Christianity, real and personal estate in New York city in 1857, names of state governors, population and wealth of states, war debts of Europe (sic) in 1855, list of the Presidents down to Buchanan (and one wonders if as he pasted in that clipping the gentle scrapbookmaker dreamed on the fast approaching day when his own name would be appended next in order!)

### NOTATIONS MADE

Lincoln's orderly habits of mind are attested not only by the neatness and care with which each clipping is affixed and indexed but also by a careful notation of the source, penned alongside each bit. The newspaper names bring memories of many which long since have gone to a journalistic Valhalla—The Baltimore Clipper, The Washington Intelligencer, Republic and Sentinel, The Richmond South, The Charleston Mercury. The name of The New York Times and The Tribune, in which Horace Greeley was waging his doughty war for Abolition, and the "home papers," such as The Sangamon Journal, Quincy Herald and Illinois State Journal, appear frequently, of course, but the wide territory the clippings cover shows Lincoln had some means of protecting himself against merely provincial opinion in the burning issue in which he was absorbed.

The first book's contents begin with the Henry Clay dictum that the Constitution "is silent and passive" on slavery, "having neither created nor does it continue" the custom. These must have been fighting words to a stern Lincoln as he carefully pasted them in place. Closely following is a reference to Daniel Webster's pledge

in the debate on the Oregon bill in 1848 that "I shall consent to no extension of the area of slavery on this continent."

### CONSTITUTION QUOTED

Then comes a clipping on the Douglas report of 1854 proposing repeal of the Compromise act of 1820 and it is apparent that Lincoln then was preparing for the day when he should face his great antagonist on the entire issue.

Next following is a clipping designed to keep in mind the exact language of the second paragraph of the Constitution—"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created free and equal..." upon which premise Lincoln was to wage his war and finally fall in death.

There is a quotation from the Abolitionist Garrison, on the heels of which comes the "Divine right of slavery" speech by Douglas. More ammunition for the lanky Sangamon county lawyer who was to annihilate the arguments of the "Little Giant." Preparatory also for this was a listing in Lincoln's hand of "mobs, vanishings, invasions, murder, assaults," including those on Greeley and Sumner, reflecting the bitterness that was growing over the Sundered nation.

For his armory Lincoln carefully preserved published statistics directly bearing on the issue. There are clippings showing that of 6,222,418 whites in the South only 347,525 owned slaves "yet this faction controls every branch of the Federal government and wields its influence on increasing and perpetuating slavery."

### SLAVERY MENTIONED

"The sectional character of the United States Supreme Court at that time is carefully recorded and tables preserved to show the superior value of the crops of the North in contrast with those of the South. Topping this was a clipping on the cost of slave territory to the Union, beginning with the Louisiana Purchase, down to ten million dollars spent on the Southern railroad in Mesilla valley.

To bolster his contentions when he should meet Douglas in final decisive debate, Lincoln carefully preserves a clipping covering George Washington's letter to Lafayette in 1798 in which the First President said: "I agree with you cordially in your views in regard to Negro slavery. I have long considered it a most serious evil, both socially and politically, and I should rejoice in any feasible scheme to rid our States of such a burden."

On a page nearby is a clipping on Washington's letter in 1794 to Tobias Lee, then in England negotiating the sale of parts of Washington's landed estates, in which he expressed himself anxious "to rid myself of certain species of property which I possess very repugnantly to my own feeling."

### CLIMAX IMPENDS

The crescendo of the times is detected as one turns the pages of the second book and one senses a climax impends. There is a clipping on rufianism in Kansas, symptomatic of the approaching actual schism of the Union. Then comes a sardonic editorial captioned "Failure of Free Society" concerning poverty in England and dealing with a serious proposal for the enslavement of all persons who have no property! This clipping was long enough to run over from one page and to be sure that no part of such an amazing suggestion should be missed Lincoln carefully wrote on the bottom of the first "over to next page" and in case the second page should be read first he marked that one "begin at opposite page."

At this point a clipping containing the preamble to the Constitution, beginning "We, the People," is inserted as a stern reminder of what the United States is, always to be borne in mind.

The serious tenor of the scrapbooks' contents is momentarily relieved with three random lines of type which had not escaped Lincoln's eye, concerning an evanescent political party, the entity and object of which were succinctly stated.

"1. For President, David R. Atchison.

"2. We trust that the next Congress may be the last in the U. S."

### RECORD CLOSES

So the record moves toward its close, where are clippings on the electoral votes of the states, as though

Lincoln even then was adding up his chances in 1860.

In 1858 he stood against Douglas for election to the United States Senate and ensued the historic seven debates for which, in these little books and in his mighty mind, Lincoln had so long prepared. He destroyed the sharpest arguments of the defender of slavery but was not chosen. It was in the course of these debates that he overruled his beseeching board of strategy, insisted upon uttering his "house divided" speech. Douglas was returned to the Senate, but the man "For the Ages" knew his destiny and was able to write to one friend, "I am after bigger game, a battle worth 60 of this," and to another, "The question is not half settled. We are right and cannot finally fail."

Like Elijah, as one biographer has expressed it, Lincoln then stepped into his "ascending chariot of fire" not unmindful of the glory already achieved for on the flyleaf of the clasp book, attached with pardonable pride apparently some time after the event, is a single newspaper paragraph. It is cut from a report of one of the debates and is the immortal: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved, I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or the other."



# Bold, Skillful Ohio Doctor Saved Douglas; Thus Started Lincoln Toward White House

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Morrow, the editor of The Columbus (O.) Citizen, herewith adds a hitherto unwritten story to the lore of Abraham Lincoln.

By WALTER MORROW

"... for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost."

—Poor Richard's Almanac, 1757.

IF there had not been a Dr. Horace Ackley at Cleveland in 1855, Stephen A. Douglas probably would have lost his voice or died. If Douglas had lost his voice there would have been no Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858. If there had been no debates Abraham Lincoln quite probably would have remained an obscure country politician in 1860.

Without Lincoln the country might have been partitioned, because some of the strongest Abolitionists wanted to let "our erring sisters go in peace." But the nail that saved the shoe and the horse and the rider was ready when needed. A tough, pioneer, whisky-loving surgeon named Ackley, who fought off mobs when he wanted to operate on human beings, was the nail.

Born in 1815 in Genesee County, New York, he began practicing medicine in Akron in 1835. Soon he moved to Toledo, then to Willoughby, where he taught in the Willoughby Medical School, and then to Cleveland, where he held the chair of surgery in the Cleveland Medical College.

## He Feared Nothing

AN ambidextrous six-footer who feared nothing, brusque in manner yet gentle with the sick, Dr. Ackley soon won a national reputation by his daring and skill. This reputation brought a despairing Douglas to his office in 1855, weary from 20 years of battle, and beyond the skill of the practitioners Chicago offered at that time.

Ackley did not fail him. He performed what was for that day a daring and original throat operation. In a few weeks the "Little Giant" left for Washington, on the road to recovery but still with a voice unequal to the demands made on it in the Senate.

Douglas, who was not exactly



DR. HORACE ACKLEY

a temperance man, had suffered a near breakdown as the result of his vigorous campaign against "Know Nothings" and Abolitionists, who were after him because of his vote in favor of repealing the Missouri Compromise of 1820.

(The Missouri Compromise provided that no territory in the original Louisiana Purchase area north of a line of 36-30, except Missouri, should be slave territory. Douglas favored repeal because he believed in Popular Sovereignty, or local determination of the issue.)

Lincoln knew the "Little Giant" was in trouble. He wanted Douglas' seat in the Senate, and began testing arguments that would win it.

By 1858 Lincoln felt the time was ripe. The "Know Nothings," the Prohibitionists and the Abolitionists were against Douglas. Moreover, President James Buchanan, who had broken with him on the Kansas question, was throwing the weight of the national administration against him. Lincoln challenged Douglas to debate him, and the party was on.

Lincoln lost the election to Douglas, but the debates made him President.

## Douglas Never Better

IT is doubtful if any American politician ever put forth a stronger effort to win than Douglas did in the campaign of 1858. He never was better, and when he was good no one could beat him.

known in a general way.

On Oct. 27, 1855, Douglas was scheduled to speak at Paris, Ill. He was so hoarse and ill that he could only bow to the crowd, and he was taken to the home of Dr. Ezra Reed at Terre Haute, Ind. He had paroxysms of coughing and was speechless for hours at a time. George Fort Milton, in his "The Eve of Conquest," says that "his life was despaired of." Then the decision was made to take him to Dr. Ackley in Cleveland, where he remained for a month.

## Blazed His Own Trails

ACKLEY was the kind of man who blazed his own trails. His education was meager by modern standards, but he was a scientist in the best meaning of the word, and he added to human knowledge by his daring and skill. He was hot-tempered, but it is told of him that he once broke into tears when a small girl upon whom he had operated drew his head down and kissed him. That was before the day of anesthetics.

Cleveland mobs often threatened him. On one occasion a crowd in Willoughby, angered by news that he was operating on humans, went to the medical school. He rolled out a small cannon and threatened to sweep the crowd with it. The crowd dispersed.

On one occasion he was prosecuted, at the instigation of a fellow practitioner, for dissecting a body. He took the stand and was acquitted. Another doctor then was tried on the same charge, whereupon Dr. Ackley swore that the body belonged to him.

At another time police raided his office in search for a body he was dissecting. Tipped off, he put the body in a barrel and rolled it out on the sidewalk. The police walked by it unknowingly.

## 'Revoked' Thumb Operation

IT is told that a patent-medicine peddler once entered the Willoughby Medical College to sell his products. The students and faculty members told him they were going to dissect him. The peddler jumped out a window and was badly hurt. Again a mob had to be dispersed.

A man with a dislocated thumb once went to Dr. Ackley, who put it in place in an instant. The man complained of the bill, which was \$10. Ackley asked to see the hand again, and forced the thumb out of joint.

Dr. Ackley did not live to see Lincoln become President. Returning to Cleveland from Detroit by steamer in April of 1859, he became ill and died.



But in the course of the debates, Lincoln, who had been accused of dodging, took a stand. **"No nation can endure half slave and half free,"** he said. Many historians believe the statement lost him the Senate seat he wanted. Others think it actually made him votes, and that he lost because of Douglas' prestige, his long acquaintance with the voters, his oratory and superb handling of himself.

At any rate Douglas went back to the Senate and Lincoln took his place among the leaders of the new Republican Party. If he had not had the national publicity that he got from the debates with Douglas it is doubtful if he could have overcome Seward in the National Convention of 1860.

There are no medical records of Dr. Ackley's operations. But Douglas left one. Friends also left references to it. So the circumstances of the operation that saved Douglas' voice for the Lincoln-Douglas debates are

## Delegates Should Remember the Whigs

IN A SERIES of newspaper articles, Wendell Willkie has been boldly discussing certain things which he thinks should go into the Republican platform.

To most of the delegates, this must seem a very questionable thing to do. Platforms are supposed to be written in a back room somewhere with the idea of obscuring issues rather than expressing them.



Wendell Willkie.

It is almost indecent of Willkie to expose "states' rights" as a fake issue, raised to make people forget that farm prices, minimum wages and employment security are national problems upon which the convention should declare a national policy.

Willkie actually wants the delegates to take a stand on real issues. What kind of a politician is he anyway? A rank amateur? A poor excuse for a Republican?

The answer is that he is a Republican like Lincoln. And many of the Republican delegates in Chicago today would feel at home attending the last conventions of the dying Whig party, which tried to avoid the slavery issue by adopting planks on states' rights.

### 'A House Divided.'

CERTAIN gentlemen in the Stevens and Blackstone hotels would have had heart failure if they had been present when Seward talked on the subject of "The Irrepressible Conflict," and when Lincoln made his alarming "House Divided" speech: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free."

As Republican candidate for the Senate, Lincoln insisted that Congress should take steps to prevent the spread of slavery, which he said "is a national concern and must be attended to by the nation."

His Democratic opponent, Stephen A. Douglas, tried to compromise the issue with his doctrine of "squatter sovereignty"—the people of each new territory should be allowed to decide whether they wanted slavery or not.

This artful dodge was calculated to appeal to the states' rights Whigs in Illinois who didn't like slavery, and to pro-slavery Democrats in the South whose support Douglas would need when he ran for President.

### No One for Him to Debate.

AT THIS point Lincoln challenged Douglas to a series of joint debates, and after boxing him up and down the state, cornered him at Freeport with the crucial question: Could the people of a territory lawfully exclude slavery before they formed a state constitution?

And Douglas was forced to say "Yes," saving his chances in Illinois, but forever alienating the South which wanted slavery protected as a matter of national policy.

There was no radio in 1858, and no syndicated articles, but the Lincoln-Douglas debates were taken down in shorthand and reprinted in newspapers everywhere. People who had never heard of the obscure Illinois lawyer began to talk of running him for President.

The new Republican party nominated and elected Lincoln in 1860, because two years before he had faced the issues head-on and had discussed them with unmatched skill before a national audience.

Willkie has to sit down and write newspaper articles. There isn't anyone to debate with any more.

# Washington Daybook

By Jack Stinnett

Washington — History lesson: There has been a great deal of talk of late about the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and of whether they established political precedents.

I have run across some side-lights which seem to me far too interesting to be buried in history books.

The debates were held in 1858, when Stephen A. Douglas, the senatorial incumbent, was running for re-election and Railsplitter Abe Lincoln, a newcomer in national politics, was endeavoring to unseat him.

## Many Were Informal

The debates started, and many of them were continued, on a purely informal basis. Senator Douglas would appear for a scheduled speech. Sometimes when he was well along, gangling Abe would show up lounging around the rim of the crowd, and, either by accident or design, Republicans in the audience would demand to hear from Lincoln after Douglas had completed his address. Sometimes the two did not appear on the platform on the same day.

There is a story that Douglas, driving into a southern Illinois town for a scheduled speech, met Lincoln rushing to the town Douglas had just appeared in to make his rebuttal address.

"The Little Giant" hailed his opponent and said, "Abe, you better come on back and argue with me here. With me along you'll get an audience."

## None In 1860

In 1860, when Lincoln was nominated at Chicago and Douglas at Baltimore (after the first Democratic convention at Charleston had deadlocked and rebellious, fire-eating southerners withdrew to name their own candidate) there were no debates.

As a matter of fact, Lincoln did no active campaigning, remaining in Springfield to answer correspondence and receive delegations. Douglas did campaign. When he started speaking in Maine, it was almost a political scandal, because for 70 years it had been a tradition that presidential candidates should never so far stoop from dignity as to make speeches for office.

By the time Douglas had swung into the South, it is said, he was weary, discouraged and perhaps convinced that Lincoln would win. At any rate, he opened his St. Louis speech with: "I am not here tonight to ask for your votes for the Presidency. . . . I am here to make an appeal to you on behalf of the union and the peace of the country." From then on "The Little Giant" pleaded more for the cause of the union than for his candidacy.

## Pledged His Support

When Lincoln came to Washington for his inaugural, one of the first to greet him at the Willard hotel was Douglas, his long-time foe, and it is reported that Douglas, gripping Lincoln's hand, said:

"You and I have been for many years politically opposed to each other, but in our devotion and attachment to the Constitution and the union, we have never differed—in this we are one—this must and shall not be destroyed. Our union must be preserved. Partisan feeling must yield to patriotism. I am with you, Mr. President, and God bless you."

When Lincoln later made his inaugural address and stood hesitantly a moment before the cluttered, rickety table, debating what to do with his tall beaver hat, it was Democratic Sen. Stephen A. Douglas who stepped to his side, took his hat and held it throughout the ceremony.



# Issues of 1858 Live in Today's Conflicts

On this anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth in Kentucky, the following excerpts from an account of the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858 are directly applicable. They touch contemporary thought and issues. They come from an article by Herbert Mitgang in *The New York Times Sunday Magazine*.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO this year, the most famous debate in American history occurred. For four exciting months before Election Day, Abraham Lincoln of Springfield and Stephen Douglas of Chicago campaigned up and down Illinois for United States Senator.

The candidate of the newly formed Republican Party and the Democratic incumbent traveled nearly ten thousand miles by rail, packet boat and horse and made speeches in more than seventy-five towns, of which seven were "joint discussions." By November 2, 1858, the voters of Illinois—and of the United States, North and South—knew the issues and the men intimately.

A hundred years later the subjects they discussed, which aroused people all over the expanding country, still are concerns of the American conscience and echoes of them are heard in arguments about some of today's problems.

Lincoln's platform style seemed tailored to the mood; it was informal and reasonable and yet coldly logical and legalistic. Douglas was tenacious.

## A Clash of Personalities

Douglas emphasized the need for Union and for Western expansion. These were beneath his arguments. The opening of new territories and their admission as states, the growth of a national railroad network stemming from Illinois—both were worthwhile hopes which Douglas did not want dampened by sectional disputes and intraparty strife.

But Douglas was ambivalent on the question of slavery: while he tried to keep peace between Northern and Southern Democrats, he defied the pro-slavery extremists who were putting the pressure on President Buchanan to recognize Kansas as an open slave area.

Going deeper, Lincoln examined the issues in more human terms, with basic libertarian ideas. Douglas's language stirred up the abolitionists.

Douglas argued: "I am opposed to Negro citizenship in any and every form. I believe this Government was made on the white basis. I believe it was made by white men, for the benefit of white men and their posterity for ever, and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men, men of European birth and descent, instead of conferring it upon Negroes, Indians and other inferior races." ["Good for you, Douglas," some of his hearers were quoted as shouting.]

## Logic Versus Politics

To these remarks Lincoln retorted: "There is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects—certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man." [Great applause.]

The debaters went deep down into the well-springs of liberty found in the language of the Constitution. Why was not slavery mentioned openly by the Founding Fathers—where were the words "slavery" or "Negro"? Douglas saw this as justification for his views, but Lincoln took a longer look:

"It was hoped when it should be read by intelligent and patriotic men, after the institution of slavery had passed from among us, there should be nothing on the face of the great charter of liberty suggesting that such a thing as Negro slavery had ever existed among us."

The candidates faced each other for the last time in the seventh debate, at Alton, on October 15. Lincoln summed up the months of talking:

"I have said and I repeat it here, that if there be a man amongst us who does not think that the institution of slavery is wrong in any one of the aspects of which I have spoken, he is misplaced and ought not to be with us. Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? That is the

real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world."

Election Day, November 2, 1858, dawned wet and cold. It was predicted that the old Whigs in the new Republican Party would be fair-weather voters. Lincoln's total vote was 125,430 to Douglas's 121,609. Yet Lincoln lost. Because of districting and holdover Democratic legislators, when the Illinois Legislature balloted the first week in January, Douglas received the fifty-four Democratic votes and Lincoln the forty-six Republican. The Legislature, not the voter, counted.



Omaha, Nebraska  
February 13, 1959

## National Affairs—

# Mr. Lincoln Surely Didn't Regard Court as 'Sacred'

By David Lawrence

Washington.

The nation is celebrating this week the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. Eloquent eulogies are being spoken—and he deserves them all.

But what Abraham Lincoln said one hundred years ago would be denounced today as coming from a "racist," or "extremist," or a person who "defies" the Constitution.

### 'A New Wonder'

A few months ago the Library of Congress published a book containing facsimiles of the printer's copy of the stenographic record of the Lincoln-Douglas debates "as edited and prepared for the press by Abraham Lincoln."

Following is a quotation from Mr. Lincoln's speech delivered on July 13, 1858, at Chicago:

"The sacredness that Judge Douglas throws around this decision (of the Supreme Court of the United States) is a degree of sacredness that has never been before thrown around any other decision.

"I have never heard of such a thing.

"Why, decisions apparently contrary to that decision, or that good lawyers thought were contrary to that decision, have been made by that very Court before.

"It is the first of its kind; it is an astonisher in legal history—it is a new wonder of the world."

### Quoted Jefferson

Speaking further of the Dred Scott Decision, Mr. Lincoln said at Quincy, Ill., October 13, 1858:

"We do not propose to be bound by it as a political rule in that way . . . We propose so resisting it as to have it reversed if we can, and a new judicial rule established upon this subject."

In Chicago July 17, 1858, Mr. Lincoln quoted with approval a letter from Thomas Jefferson, written in 1820, which declared that if the judges of the Supreme Court are to be considered as "the ultimate arbiters of all con-

stitutional questions," this could be a "very dangerous doctrine indeed and one which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy."

On September 18, 1858, at Charleston, Ill., Mr. Lincoln said:

"I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races—that



A. Lincoln . . . "I have never heard of such a thing."

I am not nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality.

"And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race . . .

"I will add to this that I have never seen to my knowledge a man, woman or child who was in favor of producing a perfect equality, social and political, between Negroes and white men."



# The Lincoln-Douglas precedent

We confess, with due embarrassment, that it was late in our career as a schoolboy that we realized that the Lincoln-Douglas debates, an item of constant journalistic reference these days, occurred in 1858 rather than two years later and that the office contested was not the presidency but a U.S. Senate seat from Illinois.

We sometimes wonder, as the windup for this year's presidential debates evokes the memory of that immortal confrontation, how many others suffer from the same misconception — and, with more point perhaps, how many who have the date and goal right suppose that these debates were casual affairs of the Quemoy-Matsu-missile-gap gravity. And, finally, how many of us could recall, even with a pointed gun to concentrate the memory, what Lincoln and Douglas were really saying.

None of these questions is readily answered. But the debates, which Arlen Large of the *Wall Street Journal* correctly calls "the first political media event in the modern sense," live on because they deserve to live on.

The emotional stakes were high. For in the minds of prudent and reasonable people (and both Lincoln and Douglas were prudent and reasonable) it seemed that political extremists were in the saddle and were about to plunge the nation into a war over slavery. Sadly, for all that the prudent could do, they were and they would.

The immediate setting was the most astounding decision the U.S. Supreme Court ever rendered, the 1857 decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*. Technically, all the Court decided — and this in itself was outrageous enough to antislavery opinion — was that a slave like Dred Scott was not a U.S. citizen and had no standing in federal court. But the Court went beyond that meager holding to opine that blacks had no rights a white man was bound to respect and that Congress, accordingly, had no power to restrict the spread of slavery to territories forming into new states. Every political compromise dating back to the Missouri Compromise of 1820 was null and void. Politics could no longer medi-

ate the clash of extremist claims. A dire and narrow and rigid legalism reigned. Also in the background, adding its own stress, was the sad case of "bleeding Kansas," a gory battleground between the proslavery and antislavery factions where crazed old John Brown had already massacred innocent farmers who had no slaves.

To the resulting vexation and fear, both Lincoln and Douglas proposed moderate solutions, solutions that came naturally to reasonable political men. Douglas, the Democrat, had already burned his bridges to the Southern extremists who applauded the Court, but was still seeking a formula that would hold the party together. He pinned his hopes on what he called "popular sovereignty," the right of territorial settlers (most of whom were not slaveholders) to write state constitutions dealing with slavery as they chose. Lincoln, the Republican, called for every lawful effort to reverse *Dred Scott* and get Congress back into the business of stifling the spread of slavery. By most reckonings, Lincoln won the debates. He certainly won the Illinois popular vote and became presidential timber. But Douglas, because the Illinois legislature was gerrymandered, retained his Senate seat. Neither, as we now know, prevented the civil war.

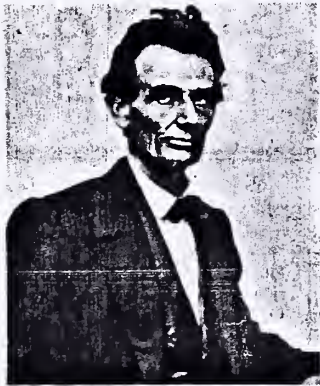
Anyone who studies the Lincoln-Douglas debates today is bound to be struck by their incongruity — that incongruity lying in the incapacity of elegant argument to get an effective grip on the wild divisions that were tearing the nation in two.

The issues of the 1960 Nixon-Kennedy debates, as we know also, had as little to do with what transpired in the 1960s, and it is likely that the Ford-Carter debates will have the same historical marginality, even if they help decide the outcome of the election.

That seems, alas, to be the way with great debates. The apparent issues too often bear little relationship to the deeper forces incubating the future. That is the disturbing thought that comes to mind when one thinks of Mr. Lincoln and Judge Douglas orating on the dusty hustings of Illinois 118 years ago.



# The 'house divided' debates: Lincoln's living legacy



By RICHARD L. STROUT

WASHINGTON — In 1854 reporters were trying out a new device: Some of them thought they had mastered "phonographic" transcription to a point where it would alter journalistic history. That is, they could take down a speech (or a debate even) as fast as the speakers talked — audience interruptions and all.

For example, Illinois Sen. Stephen A. Douglas (who wanted to be re-elected so he could run for president in 1860) had just been up in Chicago where he spoke on the evening of July 9. A young reporter, Robert H. Hitt, claimed to have taken it down in the new shorthand.

And now that Republican candidate, the tall black-haired one with hollow cheeks, Abraham Lincoln — was challenging the "Little Giant" to debate — seven times all over Illinois — there was great excitement.

Who was this Bob Hitt? Well, he was self-taught. When he was 15, a man named Pickard gave him some "phonographic" manuals, he said. He picked up enough shorthand to take notes and practiced the art and gained speed. At the time of the debates, he was probably the only stenographer in the West who could take a speech verbatim from the rostrum. Lincoln wanted him to come along on the speeches to give the Republican version of what was said.

Partisan papers garble the debate with no official transcript. Here is what the Chicago Times, (Democrat) reported on the Freeport debate, Aug. 29, 1858:

Mr. Lincoln: Fellow Citizens, Ladies and Gentlemen...

Deacon Bross (the presiding officer): Hold on Lincoln. You can't speak yet. Hitt ain't here, and there is no use of your speaking unless the Chicago Press & Tribune (Republican) has a report.

Mr. Lincoln: Ain't Hitt here? Where is he?

A Voice: Perhaps he is in the crowd.

Hitt was identified, but the crowd was so jammed that he couldn't get to the platform. By one account, he was put in a chair and passed over the heads of the crowd.

Other reporters at the debates were Horace White, for the Tribune; Henry Binmore of England, self-taught phonographic writer who had a system of his own that nobody else could read, employed by the pro-Douglas St. Louis Republican; and others.

Who was this Lincoln? Everybody knew Douglas, but this tall, gangling Lincoln (though he once served a term in Congress) was a dark horse. The 1,500 delegates of the new Republican Party had just nominated him for Senate at Springfield. There they forgot his oddities — his gangling figure, his rumpled vest and trousers — when he began to talk:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand," he said.

"I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and

half free.

"I do not expect the Union to be divided — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

"It will become all one thing or all the other...."

No wonder emotions rose. By inference, Lincoln charged a conspiracy to extend slavery into free states.

In the Lincoln-Douglas debates, the eyewitness account in the New York Evening Post (Aug. 23), describes the urbane Douglas's shirt, ruffles and all — "a short, thick-set, burly man, with large round head, heavy hair, dark complexion, and fierce bull-dog bark...."

And then Lincoln:

"Built on the Kentucky type, he is very tall, slender, and angular, awkward even, in gait and attitude. His face is sharp, large-featured, and unprepossessing. His eyes are deep-set, under heavy brows; his forehead is high and retreating, and his hair is dark and heavy. In repose, I must confess that 'Long Abe's' appearance is not comely. But stir him up, and the fire of his genius plays on every feature. His eye glows and sparkles, every lineament, now so ill-formed, grows brilliant and expressive, and you have before you a man of rare power and of strong magnetic influence. Listening to him Saturday, calmly and unprejudiced, I was convinced that he has no superior as a stump speaker...." (The dispatch is signed simply, "Bayou.")

In 1906, the Illinois State Historical Library collected contemporary accounts of the debates. They make it vivid. You see it as the farm crowd saw it on those hot three-hour afternoons pushed against the speakers' platform, 125 years ago: the ridiculous contrast between the short Douglas and the tall Lincoln. The crowd is part of the drama. It participates, interruptions are recorded. Amid trivialities there is the feeling of a nation in peril.

At Ottawa, Ill., Lincoln said, "I hope you will permit me to read a part of a printed speech that I made at Peoria which will show... the position I took in the contest of 1854."

A Voice: Put on your specs.

Mr. Lincoln: You see I am obliged to do so; I am no longer a young man (laughter)....

Or there is the report sent to the New York Daily Tribune (Sept. 1):

"Douglas is no heauty, but he certainly has the advantage of Lincoln in looks. Very tall and awkward, with a face of grotesque ugliness, he presents the strongest possible contrast to the thickset, burly hust, and short legs of the Judge. They tell this story of Lincoln in Southern Illinois, where he resides:

"'Being out in the woods hunting, he fell in with a most truculent-looking hunter, who immediately took a sight on him with his rifle.

"'Halloo!' said Lincoln, 'What are you going to do, stranger?'

"'See here, friend. The folks in my settlement told me if ever I saw a man uglier than I was, then I must shoot him; and I've found him at last.'

"'Well,' said Lincoln, after a good look at the man, 'shoot away, for if I am really uglier than you are, I don't want to live any longer.'

The dispatch is signed, simply, "Sauganash."

What did the scene look like? James MacGregor Burns imagines the scene in his splendid "The Vineyard of Liberty" (Knopf 1982): "of farmers arriving in huckboards, huggies, carriages, and carts, of roads so enveloped in dust as to resemble great smokehouses, of farmers in overalls and their wives in hoop skirts and young mothers with babies at their breasts standing in the burning sun for... hours...."

Or here is the account from historians Morison and Commager:

Imagine some parched little prairie town of central Illinois, set in fields of rustling corn, a dusty courthouse square surrounded by low wooden houses and stores hlistering in the August sunshine, decked with flags and party emblems... brass bands blaring out, "Hail! Columbia" and "Oh! Susanna," wooden platform with railing, perspiring semicircle of local dignitaries in black frock coats and two-quart beaver hats. The Douglas special train pulls into the "deepo" and fires a salute from the 12-pounder cannon bolted to a flatcar at the rear. Senator Douglas, escorted by the local Democratic club in columns of fours, drives up in an open carriage and

aggressively mounts the platform. His short, stocky figure is clothed in the best that the city of Washington can produce... Abe Lincoln, who had previously arrived by an ordinary passenger train, approaches on foot, his furrowed face and long neck conspicuous above the crowd. He shamles onto the platform, displaying a rusty frock coat the sleeves of which stop several inches short of his wrists. His face, as he turns to the crowd, has an air of settled melancholy.

No recorded debate in the English language surpassed those between Lincoln and Douglas for keen give and take, pithy Saxon language, and clear exposition of vital issues.

Yes on the surface it's jolly — a fair day atmosphere in the prairie

town. But what's that rumble underneath? Is it the thunder of Armageddon? As to the senatorial election — Douglas wins, Lincoln loses. Or has he lost? Lincoln has established a national reputation for the presidential election that is coming up in 1860....

Meanwhile, the long speeches end, the weary crowd loses cohesion and turns back into families and individuals, and the huggies drive off over

the lonely prairie. They are iron men who are speakers and throw their voices for an hour and a half to the edge of the crowd. But it's an iron crowd, too, ready to stand three hours and listen.

Back home they think it over. What was it Lincoln said about a house divided against itself cannot stand?

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# An American Tradition

By HERBERT MITGANG

President Reagan and Walter F. Mondale will have to make decisions sometime soon about facing each other in public debate, an aspect of American politics that has reached national audiences as far back as 1858, when Abraham Lincoln sought to defeat Senator Stephen A. Douglas.

Then, as now, the challenger saw the debates as an opportunity for greater recognition, a chance to join and clarify the issues, and the ideal way to persuade the voters. A century and a quarter later, the political wisdom goes that it is best for an incumbent to avoid debates.

Mr. Mondale says he hopes to go back to the Lincoln-Douglas practice of debating the issues. He is seeking six debates, covering the spectrum of national and international concerns: military defense and arms control, foreign policy, education, the economy, the environment, fairness and justice. And he has suggested that these debates could include questioning by journalists.

Mr. Reagan's chief of staff, James A. Baker 3d, said that Mr. Mondale's proposal "cannot be taken seriously," but the camps have agreed in principle that at least one debate will be held.

## 7 'Discussions' for Lincoln

There were seven widely publicized "joint discussions" in 1858. Senator Douglas knew he would have his hands full, yet took up the challenge because he believed so firmly in his own views on the extension of slavery by democratic choice.

The senatorial candidates decided that opening speeches would be an hour, replies an hour and a half, and the rebuttal by the first speaker a half hour. Lincoln the lawyer could not refrain from pointing out to Douglas, "Although by the terms, as you propose, you take four openings and closes to my three, I accede, and thus close the arrangement."

Since the four debates between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon in 1960 initiated modern Presidential debates on television, extending and accepting a challenge has depended not on which candidate could marshal his arguments most convincingly but on two other factors: where he was in the polls and how he would be perceived as a personality on the small screen. These factors are expected to operate again in 1984.

"Looking back now on all four of the debates," Nixon wrote in "Six

Crises," two years after his 1960 defeat, "there can be no question but that Kennedy had gained more from the debates than I. While many observers gave me the edge in the last three, he definitely had the advantage in the first, and especially with the television audience. Twenty million people saw the first debate who did not bother to tune in the others."

## Nixon Advocated Topicality

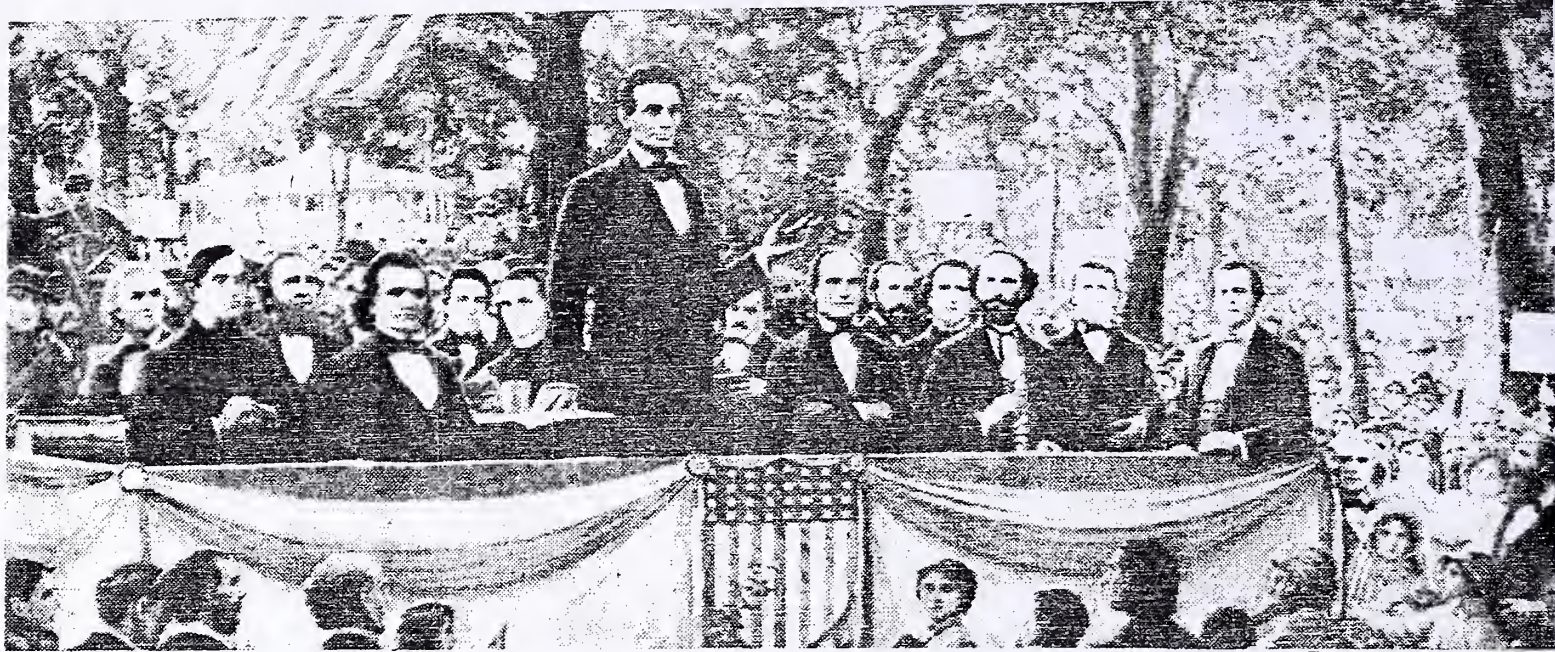
Mr. Nixon then went on to make a point similar to Mr. Mondale's this year: Debates on the issues are needed.

"In future campaigns," Mr. Nixon said, "I would suggest that debates would be more interesting and would serve a more useful purpose if they were limited to specific subjects with only the candidates participating, and if the time allowed for discussion were two hours rather than one so that a subject could be discussed in adequate depth."

However, Mr. Nixon did not follow his own advice when he ran for President in 1968 or for re-election in 1972; like Mr. Reagan, he was ahead in the polls and avoided a possible repeat of his losing Kennedy match. Journalists asking questions participated in two of the Nixon-Kennedy debates; Mr. Mondale's challenge also raises the possibility of including journalists.

President Ford, behind in the polls in 1976, set a precedent by extending the challenge. Debating Jimmy Carter three times, analysts said Mr. Ford had done fairly well in the first on domestic issues, fumbled in the second on foreign policy (saying that Eastern Europe was free of Soviet domination) and still faced an aggressive chal-





The August W. Kessberger Collection

Abraham Lincoln in an 1858 debate with Senator Stephen A. Douglas, seated second from left. They held seven "joint discussions" throughout Illinois.

lenger in the third on general issues.

In 1980, there was only the one-shot encounter between President Carter and Mr. Reagan, and little but Mr. Reagan's one-liner, "There you go again!" was remembered.

#### Debating an Empty Chair

If politics rule out a debate this autumn, Mr. Mondale might resort to the old campaign device of debating an empty chair. That, of course, would not achieve a big audience and would leave Mr. Reagan free of questioning by Mr. Mondale or correspondents.

No correspondents questioned Lincoln and Douglas while they were debating, but some in the audience interrupted and were given off-the-cuff answers.

The senatorial rivals traveled nearly 10,000 miles by rail, packet boat and horse, going from town to town, debating the extension of slavery, the effect of the Dred Scott decision, the future status of blacks. Under scorching sun, sometimes 15,000 people at a time heard them speak. Their words were recorded by shorthand reporters, the beginning of this method of newspaper coverage. With barbecues and brass bands, the atmosphere of the debates was as spirited as a country fair.

#### 'He Is Misplaced,' Lincoln Said

In the final debate at Alton on Oct. 15, Lincoln summed up four months on the stump: "If there be a man amongst us who does not think that the institution of slavery is wrong in any one of the

aspects of which I have spoken, he is misplaced and ought not to be with us. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles — right and wrong — throughout the world."

Lincoln won the popular vote, but lost the election.

It had been predicted that the old Whigs and the new Republican Party would be fair-weather voters, and Election Day dawned wet and cold in 1858. Nevertheless, Lincoln's total vote was 125,430 to Douglas's 121,609.

But the state legislatures had the responsibility of choosing senators, as they would on ratification of the 17th Amendment in 1913. Democrats con-

trolled the Illinois Legislature in January 1859, and Douglas received 54 votes to Lincoln's 46 in a party-line vote.

Lincoln emerged from defeat as man of national stature, the quintessential Republican from the West whose words on the stump were widely reported in the newspapers. His reasoned arguments, read across the country, led to his nomination for President two years later.

Many historians have wondered how Lincoln would have fared in a televised debate. Carl Sandburg, the poet and Lincoln historian, guessed that even in a cosmeticized atmosphere, the force of Lincoln's mind and argument would have made him a television star, and he would never retreat from the chance to speak his mind.

*Sunday J. J. Times*  
9/2/84



# TV debates pale compared to Lincoln/Douglas

As the Democrats and Republicans debate over who won the Debate and the pundits sit back and analyze the effects of our latest prime time dose of profundity, there are those who simply sit back and yearn — yearn for a bit of substance, a bit of reason, a bit of logic.

Last Sunday night's debate — while hyped as an ideological battleground such as has not been seen in recent years — was really nothing more than a beauty contest, void of any opportunity for intellectual argument or powerful political bantering.

Forced by the prefabricated rules of the debate to give nothing more than mini-speeches and pseudo-arguments, the candidates may have received passing grades in composure, but they most definitely failed on substance.

But then, who could be expected to state an argument in favor of, or opposed to, an issue as complex as abortion in two-and-a-half minutes?

A little over a hundred years ago, two men agreed to and engaged in a series of debates without the advantages (or disadvantages) of the modern media.

There were no microphones, no panels of journalists, no television cameras. The candidates did not negotiate on such trivial matters as the color of the backdrop, the angle of the camera to the podium and the types of questions to be asked.

They simply got up and went at each other — man to man — issue by issue. Their arguments were lengthy, persuasive, well-thought-out and painfully relevant to the society of the day.

Their names were Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, and they were running for the Senate in Illinois.

The major issue over which they clamored was slavery — as touchy and emotional an issue as ever to come upon the scene in the United States. A contrast of the texts of the two debates points out without much need for further comment the sorry state into which we have allowed our public realm of politics to fall.

Reagan on abortion in the nationally televised debate, Oct. 7, 1984:

"... With me, abortion is not a problem with religion, it's a problem with the Constitution. I believe that until and unless someone can establish that the unborn child is not a living human being, then that child is already protected by the Constitution which guarantees life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness to all of us..."

Mondale on abortion in the nationally televised debates, Oct. 7, 1984:

Mondale: This is one of the most emotional and difficult issues that could possibly be debated... I don't know the answer to when life begins, and it's not that simple either. You've got another life involved. And if it's rape, how do you draw moral judgments on that? If it's incest, how do you draw moral judgments on that? Does every woman in America have to present herself before some judge picked by Jerry Falwell to clear her personal judgement? It won't work..."

Reagan again: "... Well with regard to this being a personal choice, isn't that what a murder-

Lincoln the candidate.



Stephen A. Douglas: "The Little Giant."



Scott Pratt



avored object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half-slave and half-free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new — North as well as South..."

Later, during the debates "... It is not true that our fathers, as Judge Douglas assumes, made this government part slave and part free.

Understand the sense in which he puts it. He assumes that slavery is a rightful thing within itself — was introduced by the framers of the Constitution. The exact truth is that they found the institution existing among us, and they left it as they found it.

But, in making the government, they left this institution with many clear marks of disapprobation upon it. They found slavery among them, and they left it among them because of the difficulty — the absolute impossibility — of its immediate removal.

And when Judge Douglas asks me why we cannot let it remain part slave and part free, as the fathers of the government made it, he asks a question based upon an assumption which is itself a falsehood; and I in turn upon him ask him the question, when the policy that the fathers of the government had adopted in relation to this element among us was the best policy in the world — the only wise policy — the only policy that we can ever safely continue upon — that will ever give us peace, unless this dangerous clement masters us all and becomes a national institution — I turn upon him and ask him why he could not leave it alone..."

That is only a very small dose of some of the most delicious debate rhetoric ever recorded. It's too bad it has become extinct.

By the way, Douglas won the election.

er is insisting on, his or her right to kill someone because of whatever fault they think justifies that..."

Pretty uninspiring stuff, isn't it?

Stephen Douglas on the slavery issue, Galesburg, Illinois, October 7, 1858:

Douglas: "... I tell you that this Chicago doctrine of Lincoln's — declaring that the Negro and the white man are made equal by the Declaration of Independence and by Divine Providence — is a monstrous heresy. The signers of the Declaration of Independence never dreamed of the Negro when they were writing that document. They referred to white men, to men of European birth and European descent, when they declared the equality of all men.

I see a gentleman shaking his head. Let me remind him that, when Thomas Jefferson wrote that document, he was the owner, and so continued until his death, of a large number of slaves. Did he intend to say in that Declaration that his Negro slaves, which he held and treated as property, were created his equals by divine law and that he was violating the law of God every day of his life by holding them as slaves?

It must be borne in mind that, when that De-

claration was put forth, every one of the thirteen colonies were slave-holding Colonies, and every man who signed that instrument represented a slave-holding constituency.

Recollect, also, that no one of them emancipated his slaves, much less put them on an equality with himself, after he signed the Declaration. On the contrary, they all continued to hold their Negroes as slaves during the Revolutionary War. Now, do you believe — are you willing to have it said — that every man who signed the Declaration of Independence declared the Negro his equal and then was hypocrite enough to continue to hold him as a slave in violation of what he believed to be the divine law?

And yet, when you say that the Declaration of Independence includes the Negro, you charge the signers of it with hypocrisy.

I say to you, frankly, that in my opinion this government was made by our fathers on the white basis. It was made by white men for the benefit of white men..."

Abraham Lincoln on slavery, June 17, 1858 at the Republican convention.

"... If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the



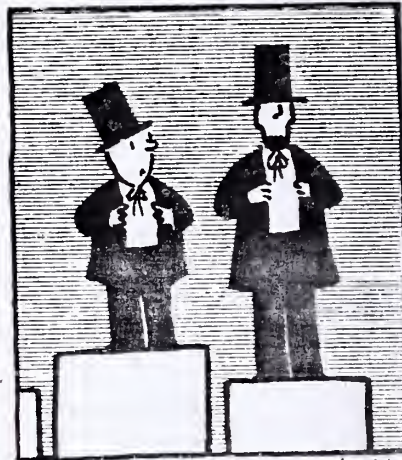
## Results of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates

To the Editor:

"Congress: A Matter of Measurement" (Washington Talk page, April 20) errs on the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates. Douglas, "the Little Giant," did not "topple" the taller Lincoln in gaining re-election to the United States Senate.

The immediate result of the debates was indeed inconclusive. Senators were then chosen by state legislatures, and in the 1858 legislative election, Illinois Republican candidates slightly outpolled their Democratic rivals. However, because of an apportionment that favored Democratic districts, Douglas secured a majority when the legislature voted early the next January.

In the long run, however, the debates were favorable to Lincoln and fatal to Douglas. Lincoln gained national stature from his performance and became a serious Presidential contender. Douglas, however, having argued during the debates that slavery in the territories could be barred by local initiative ("popular sovereignty"), became a near pariah



among national Democrats, helped to split the party and thus virtually destroyed his ardent Presidential hopes.

PAUL SIFF

Associate Professor of History  
Sacred Heart University  
Fairfield, Conn., April 27, 1987

NY TIMES 7/3/87

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1988

Mark Neely - Museum

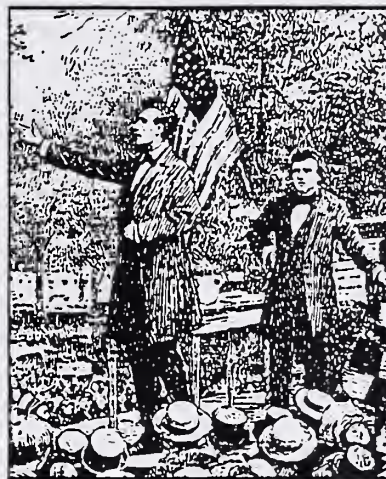
## Surely Lincoln-Douglas Roll in Their Graves

To the Editor:

When Abraham Lincoln wanted to discuss the issues in the fateful election of 1858 he simply wrote to his opponent, Stephen Douglas, who answered: "I agree to your suggestion that we shall alternately open and close the discussion. I will speak at Ottawa one hour; you can reply, occupying an hour and a half, and I will then follow for half an hour ... We will alternate in like manner in each successive place."

Thus, without the help (or interference) of media consultants the greatest political debate in American history was arranged. For an hour and a half each, without the filter of pre-arranged questions, Lincoln and Douglas confronted each other and the issues of the day. One can only wonder what they would have thought of today's "debates," with each candidate responding in two or three minutes to reporters' canned questions.

Instead of thoughtful process we get political theatricality. The robotic performances of today's "debaters" as they put out their carefully preprogrammed responses stand in sharp contrast to the comment on Lincoln-Douglas made by the great Charles



Evans Hughes, who said: "Lincoln made himself the apostle of thinking America in its opposition to the extension of slavery" and that "there has never been an illustration ... within the memory of man where intellect has exerted so potent a magnetism."

The candidates ought to be required to study Lincoln-Douglas to learn what a real debate might be like.

MEYER RANGELL

Bloomington, N.Y., Oct. 10, 1988





Friday, August 22, 2008

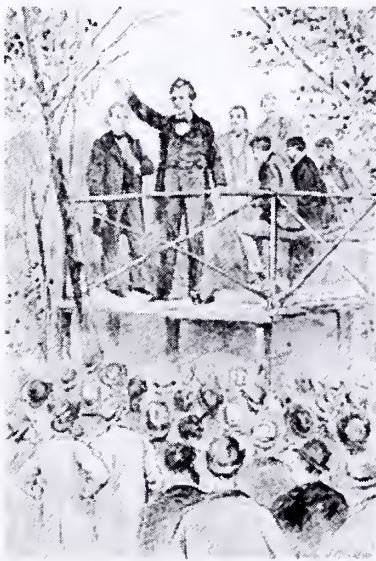
## **Past and Present: The Lincoln-Douglas Debates, 150 Years Later**

### **At stake was a U.S. Senate seat—but also the definition of democracy and the future of the country**

*By Allen C. Guelzo*

Posted August 21, 2008

On the dry, sun-baked afternoon of Aug. 21, 1858, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas stepped onto a hastily constructed platform in the main square of the Illinois River town of Ottawa and began a series of seven one-on-one debates that bored a smoldering hole straight into the heart of American politics. Both men were candidates for the U.S. Senate, and both were veterans of the conventional give-and-take of politics. But these debates would carry Lincoln and Douglas far above the conventional. They would focus on an issue that promised a whirlwind of catastrophe for America, and they would end with two irreconcilable visions of democracy itself—visions that still divide us today.



In 1858, Douglas was the most powerful politician in the Democratic Party and maybe, for that matter, in the nation. Eight years before, he had won national applause for cobbling together a plan, based on the doctrine of "popular sovereignty," to resolve the vexing issue of legalized slavery in America. Congress had been paralyzed for years by the demands of southern slaveholders to open the unsettled territories of the American West to slave labor and the counterdemands of the free states of the North that the western territories be reserved for development only by free labor. "Popular sovereignty" would allow the people who actually lived in the territories to make their own decisions about legalizing slavery—and let Congress get back to other business. Riding on

the wings of popular sovereignty, the way seemed open for Douglas to capture the Democratic presidential nomination, and the presidency itself, in 1860.

Abraham Lincoln, by contrast, was a chronic political also-ran. What was worse, he was the nominee of a new party, the Republicans, who lacked both visibility and cash. But what the Republicans lacked on those points, they made up in their ferocious opposition to the spread of slavery. Lincoln, in particular, had "always hated slavery," as he had said in a speech the previous month. Slavery was the business of human bondage, and it flew straight into the face of the most sacred of American beliefs,

"that all men are created equal" and are endowed with a natural right to liberty. No amount of popular sovereignty, even in a democracy, could repeal that. And instead of dissolving the contention over slavery, Lincoln pointed out that popular sovereignty only transferred the contention to the territories, as proslavery and antislavery settlers turned murderous in their struggle for control, as had happened in Kansas.

Lincoln had not planned to challenge Douglas to a debate. But up against Douglas's powerful Illinois political machine, public debate was the only way Douglas could be forced to share the political spotlight. Confident of his own considerable oratorical powers, Douglas accepted the challenge, and when the first debate opened at Ottawa on August 21, Douglas bombarded Lincoln with an aggressive flurry of accusations. Lincoln is a radical abolitionist, Lincoln advocates racial equality, Lincoln wants civil war, Douglas charged.

Lincoln backed away defensively before the Douglas onslaught. But at the second debate, at Freeport on August 27, Lincoln came armed with accusations of his own, particularly about the illusory promise that "popular sovereignty" would guarantee peace. Over the next two debates, at Jonesboro and Charleston, Lincoln and Douglas traded even shots over slavery and popular sovereignty. But by the time of the fifth debate, at Galesburg on October 7, Douglas's stamina was beginning to crack noticeably. In the final two debates, at Quincy and Alton on October 13 and 15, Lincoln seized the high ground by denouncing slavery as a moral wrong and a tyranny indistinguishable from the divine right of kings. In his natural right "to eat the bread which he has earned by the sweat of his brow," Lincoln declared, every black slave should be "my equal, Judge Douglas's equal, and the equal of every living man."

But on Election Day, it was the Douglas machine that triumphed. Although Republicans garnered 54 percent of the vote for the state legislators who would pick the senator (the Democrats got 45 percent), the apportionment of that vote among Illinois's districts handed the final victory to Douglas. Or at least it *seemed* final. In fact, newspapers across the country that had begun reporting the debates in August in order to cover Douglas ended in November by featuring Lincoln, and Lincoln gained a national reputation that it would have been impossible to acquire in any other way. That, in turn, led to Lincoln's nomination by the Republicans for president in 1860. And there, facing Douglas again as the Democrats' presidential nominee, it was Lincoln who would gain the prize—and, in the long run, save the country.

Looking back on the debates, Lincoln was satisfied that he had made "some marks which will tell for the cause of civil liberty long after I am gone." Douglas's notion of liberty began and ended with the popular will of the people, and he proudly announced that he didn't care whether slavery was "voted



up or voted down," so long as the majority prevailed. For Lincoln, however, democracy could not survive unless the majority "voted up" what was right. Lincoln's democracy was built around the core principles of the Declaration of Independence; Douglas's democracy had at its core nothing but process.

In the age of the sound bite and the TelePrompTer, it's hard to imagine the candidates of 2008 replicating the style and complexity of the Lincoln-Douglas debates. But there are still lessons from 1858 from which we could profit. For one thing, we could dispense with the moderators (Lincoln and Douglas had none). For another, we could get the candidates and the audience out of the chatty coziness of the sound stage and out in a large open forum where persuasion and logic, not just charm, would be demanded. And we could require the candidates to take turns using one podium - to speak, in other words, not to each other, but to the people in front of them. And perhaps, just once, in the spirit of Lincoln and Douglas, we could ask the candidates to tell us what their vision of democracy is. For the sake of democracy, it's a debate worth putting back into play.

*Allen C. Guelzo is the Henry R. Luce Professor of the Civil War Era at Gettysburg College and the author of Lincoln and Douglas: The Debates That Defined America (2008).*

**Tags:** politics | Senate | Lincoln, Abraham | history | election history

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## Add your thoughts

Subject:

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*Question 1.* I desire to know whether Lincoln to-day stands pledged, as he did in 1854, in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law?

*Answer.* I do not now, nor ever did, stand pledged in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law.

*Q. 2.* I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to-day, as he did in 1854, against the admission of any more slave states into the Union, even if the people want them?

*A.* I do not now, nor ever did, stand pledged against the admission of any more slave states into the Union.

*Q. 3.* I want to know whether he stands pledged against the admission of a new state into the Union with such a Constitution as the people of that state may see fit to make?

*A.* I do not stand pledged against the admission of a new state into the Union with such a Constitution as the people of that state may see fit to make.

*Q. 4.* I want to know whether he stands to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia?

*A.* I do not stand to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

*Q. 5.* I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to the prohibition of the slave-trade between the different states?

*A.* I do not stand pledged to the prohibition of the slave-trade between the different states.

*Q. 6.* I desire to know whether he stands pledged to prohibit slavery in all the Territories of the United States north as well as south of the Missouri Compromise line?

*A.* I am impliedly, if not expressly, pledged to a belief in the *right* and *duty* of Congress to prohibit slavery in all the United States' Territories.

*Q. 7.* I desire him to answer whether he is opposed to the acquisition of any new territory unless slavery is first prohibited therein?

*A.* I am not generally opposed to honest acquisition of territory; and, in any given case, I would or would not oppose such acquisition, according as I might think such acquisition would or would not aggravate the slavery question among ourselves.

Now, my friends, it will be perceived, upon an examination of these questions and answers, that so far I have only answered that I was not *pledged* to this, that, or the other. The Judge has not framed his interrogatories to ask me any thing more than this, and I have answered in strict accordance with the interrogatories, and have answered truly, that I am not *pledged* at all upon any of the points to which I have answered. But I am not disposed to hang upon the exact form of his interrogatory. I am rather disposed to take up at least some of these questions, and state what I really think upon them.

As to the first one, in regard to the Fugitive Slave Law, I have never hesitated to say, and I do not now hesitate to say, that I think, under the Constitution of the United States, the people of the Southern States are entitled to a Congressional Fugitive Slave Law. Having said that, I have had nothing to say in regard to the existing Fugitive Slave Law farther than that I think it should have been framed so as to be free from some of the objections that pertain to it, without lessening its efficiency. And inasmuch as we are not now in an agitation in regard to an alteration or modification of that law, I would not be the man to introduce it as a new subject of agitation upon the general question of slavery.

In regard to the other question, of whether I am pledged to the admission of any more slave states into the Union, I state to you very frankly that I would be exceedingly sorry ever to be put in a position of having to pass upon that question. I should be exceedingly glad to know that there would never be another slave state admitted into the Union; but I must add that, if slavery shall be kept out of the Territories during the territorial existence of any one given Territory, and then the people shall, having a fair chance and a clear field, when they come to adopt the Constitution, do such an extraordinary thing as to adopt a slave Constitution, uninfluenced by the actual presence of the institution among them, I see no alternative, if we own the country, but to admit them into the Union.

The third interrogatory is answered by the answer to the second, it being, as I conceive, the same as the second.

The fourth one is in regard to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. In relation to that, I have my mind very distinctly made up. I should be exceedingly glad to see slavery abolished in the District of Columbia. I believe that Congress possesses the constitutional power to abolish it. Yet, as a member of Congress, I should not, with my present views, be in favor of *endeavoring* to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, unless it would be upon these conditions: *first*, that the abolition should be gradual; *second*, that it should be on a vote of the majority of qualified voters in the District; and, *third*, that compensation should be made to unwilling owners. With these three conditions, I confess I would be exceedingly glad to see Congress abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and, in the language of Henry Clay, "sweep from our capital that foul blot upon our nation."

In regard to the fifth interrogatory, I must say here, that as to the question of the abolition of the slave-trade between the different states, I can truly answer, as I have, that I am *pledged* to nothing about it. It is a subject to which I have not given that mature consideration that would make me feel authorized to state a position so as to hold myself entirely bound by it. In other words, that question has never been prominently enough before me to induce me to investigate whether we really have the constitutional power to do it. I could investigate it if I had sufficient time to bring myself to a conclusion upon that subject; but I have not done so, and I say so frankly to you here and to Judge Douglas. I must say, however, that if I should be of opinion that Congress does possess the constitutional power to abolish the slave-trade among the different states, I should still not be in favor of the exercise of that power unless upon some conservative principle, as I conceive it akin to what I have said in relation to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

My answer as to whether I desire that slavery should be prohibited in all the Territories of the United States is full and explicit within itself, and can not be made clearer by any comments of mine. So I suppose, in regard to the question whether I am opposed to the acquisition of any more territory unless slavery is first prohibited therein, my answer is such that I could add nothing by way of illustration, or making myself better understood than the answer which I have placed in writing.



## LEADING ARTICLES OF THE MONTH.

### LINCOLN'S DUEL WITH DOUGLAS.

IN the February *Lippincott's*, Col. Charles Pomerooy Button gives some fresh and readable reminiscences of Lincoln, who was his friend personally, and his antagonist politically. One of the best of these is the description of the scene in which Lincoln and Douglas arranged that memorable duel in debate which had such a momentous effect on the history of the United States.

It was arranged that Lincoln and Douglas should meet at the Tremont House, in Chicago, and arrange informally the terms of the debate. We quote Colonel Button's account of this remarkable scene:

"Fate allotted that I should make a third at that informal meeting, the only person present besides the two great principals. I was then a customs inspector in the Chicago custom-house, and happened to be in Judge Douglas' parlor when Mr. Lincoln and his friends came in. A number of other Democrats were there likewise; in fact, the gathering had somewhat the appearance of a ward caucus; but, as if by common consent, Democrats and Republicans made haste to bow themselves away. I went with the rest, but just outside the door happened to remember a batch of letters Judge Douglas had asked me to post for him, so went back. As Douglas caught sight of me, he said: 'Charlie, please open a window; the smoke here is almost stifling.'

"While I was lowering it, Mr. Lincoln said, jocularly: 'Judge, do you think it is quite safe—this leaving us alone together?' Douglas laughed and answered: 'Perhaps not.' Still I hardly knew whether to go or stay. Mr. Lincoln, I think, saw my embarrassment. He handed me a fresh copy of the *Democrat*, asking: 'Have you seen what Long John has to say?'

"In the ambush of the paper, from the room's far end, I looked at and listened to a conference truly informal. Douglas set the ball rolling. 'I believe, Mr. Lincoln,' he said, 'it is your idea that we speak jointly in every Congressional district of the State?'

"'Yes,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'that is my idea. I think, judge, we had better leave details to our friends. I will name one, you one; we leave everything to them, and agree that in case of disagreement they shall choose an umpire; but if the umpire's decision is not satisfactory to both, why, we will meet privately and agree to disagree, though I don't in the least anticipate that there will be disagreement.'

"'Nor I,' said Douglas. 'What you propose is entirely satisfactory. As my friend, I name Thomas L. Harris.'

"'And I Norman B. Judd,' said Mr. Lincoln.

"It was a queer choice, but a master-move on Lincoln's part. Norman B. Judd was the man who of all others had defeated him for the Senate. With a handful of supporters, he had caused the deadlock which eventuated in Lincoln's withdrawal. To be thus chosen placated him and made him Lincoln's firm friend. Let it be said of him further that he was among the sharpest political manipulators of his time. Lincoln's nomination to the Presidency was due to him more than to any other man. Indeed, he was for years one of Lincoln's firmest, most devoted, and least scrupulous adherents.

"'Well, that ends the matter. Let's have a drink on it,' Judge Douglas said, moving toward the sideboard and setting out two bottles. 'I believe you take old Bourbon.'

"'Not with Ike Cook's Otard, vintage of 1808, before me,' Mr. Lincoln said, reaching for the other bottle. A pony each sufficed the two statesmen; then Judge Douglas lit a Principe and offered one to Mr. Lincoln, which I think that gentleman declined. Puffing at his own, Douglas said: 'It seems to me we had as well call back our friends—there is nothing more that needs to be said on this subject.'

"By way of answer, Lincoln merely nodded. With the nod ended all reference to a momentous political event."

### THE PLAN OF THE BUFFALO EXPOSITION.

IN *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* for February, Mr. John W. Mayo writes on the record of electricity as summed up at the Buffalo Pan-American Exposition. He tells us that the visitors to Buffalo this year will see electricity used in more different ways than was ever shown in one spot before. The farmer will be able to see how it may assist in the propagation of his crops. The housewife can observe its usefulness in heating her flatirons. The banker will have a demonstration of its efficiency in guarding his strong-boxes from burglars.

### HOW THE EXPOSITION IS LAID OUT.

"For the housing of these displays, the managers of the Pan-American Exposition are providing a splendid building, with inside dimensions of 150 by 500 feet, which will provide

PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
NINTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ILLINOIS  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Professor J. A. James—"Were we not to hear a report from Colonel Carr on the plans for the Lincoln-Douglas Debate celebrations?"

Colonel Carr being called upon, said:

"I have visited everyone of the places where the Lincoln-Douglas debates were held, Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Alton and Quincy, all the places where these debates were held. I notified beforehand, the local committeemen about the time that I would be there and they assembled in each place, representative men of both political parties.

"The meetings were usually held at some local club of the town.

"At these meetings I thereupon laid the matter before them to the best of my ability, stating that the object desired to be attained was the awakening of an interest in the coming anniversary of the Lincoln-Douglas debate in that town.

"I found it very pleasant work. There were assembled a goodly number, from 20 to 30, and they manifested considerable interest, appointed committees, usually the permanent local committeeman was made chairman, and appointed executive committees to form plans to arrange for initial meeting at each place. I gave them the best advice I could as to how to proceed.

"We had an especially good meeting at Freeport. Mr. Atkins had made a special effort to that end and there were about thirty at the meeting. Mr. Atkins was made chairman.

"We had a good meeting at Jonesboro. All turned out and took an interest. Anna is now the town. Jonesboro was then the town, the two are now connected by trolley.

"I found considerable interest at Charleston. At Charleston they are trying to get Senator Beveridge to be their orator. I saw him in Washington and had a little talk with him. He was doubtful whether he could be there but he was their choice as he was a Coles county man and they want him for their orator.

"There was a good meeting at Ottawa. Mr. E. C. Swift, chairman.

"At Alton a great interest was manifested. Mr. Norton, our committeeman assembled them there, and they have made arrangements for a large celebration.

"At Quincy, Mr. Wm. H. Collins was the local chairman.

"At all places much interest was manifested. The great question was to get an orator worthy of the occasion. Most of them wanted the President of the United States.

"At Galesburg the arrangements were not made until last week. They have already had two celebrations. At one of these Governor John M. Palmer was the orator. They also had Channey M. Depew and Robert T. Lincoln.

"The year when McKinley was a candidate for re-election, 1900, they had a most extraordinary celebration. The orator was the lately departed Charles Emory Smith. President McKinley and Mrs. McKinley were there and every member of the President's cabinet except Mr. Lyman S. Gage, Secretary of the Treasury. Our people are taking a very great interest in the approaching anniversary."

Mr. Russel—"Has the date been set?"

Mr. Carr—"It is the intention to have these meetings opened exactly upon not only the day, but the hour, when the debates were held, and at the place where they were held."

President—"The people have selected as the place, the spot, where the debate was held, on the Galesburg or Knox College grounds."



Gen. Smith D. Atkins of Freeport said it was expected to have on the platform every survivor who was present at the debate fifty years ago.

President—"We would be glad to hear from local committees wherever celebrations are to be held."

Mr. Atkins spoke of the meetings for Freeport, where committees have been appointed. They will probably have two prominent speakers, one to speak on Lincoln and the other on Douglas.

Mr. W. T. Norton of Alton reported that they had great pleasure in meeting with Colonel Carr, and that matters were progressing.

Mr. Collins of Quincy was called for and he being absent, it was suggested that perhaps Mr. Ellis would report for Quincy.

President Orendorff asked if Mr. Ellis was present, but he had left the room.

Prof. Page spoke of the interest taken in these celebrations by Mr. Blair, Superintendent of Public Instruction, who has had prepared pamphlets which are intended for the use of teachers in drawing the attention of pupils to the facts mentioned; and said the pamphlets referred to could be had by anyone interested, on application.

Mrs. Weber, Chairman of Program Committee, asked for the co-operation of the entire society in the matter of the preparation of future programs, and for their help in such preparation.

Prof. James spoke of the work of preparation, which had fallen almost entirely upon the secretary and seconded her suggestion, asking assistance from all members of the society.

Mr. Carpenter, who had been absent from the room during the meeting of the Nominating Committee, asked if anything had been done in regard to the suggestion in the secretary's report favoring the printing of a quarterly publication.

President—"The adoption of the secretary's report carried with it the adoption of the suggestions made therein."

Mr. Norton, on account of circumstances which made it necessary for him to do so, resigned and nominated in his place, on the Committee on Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Mr. E. M. Bowman of Alton. This recommendation was referred to the Board of Directors.

On motion, the society adjourned to 1:30 o'clock, to meet in the literary sessions to hear the papers and addresses, according to the program of exercises.

ILL TRANS XIII

ILL TRANS XIII

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### *Aug. 21—First Lincoln-Douglas Debate*

ON Aug. 21, 1858, Abraham Lincoln and Sen. Stephen A. Douglas mounted a wooden platform in the public square at Ottawa, La Salle county, and held the first of seven debates which not only won for Douglas the Democratic Presidential nomination in 1860 but also, more than any single factor, gave Lincoln the national prominence that resulted in his election to the Presidency.

Douglas, by championing the Nebraska bill with its objectionable "squatter sovereignty," had alienated a large number of his Democratic followers in Illinois. Lincoln, a Whig leader of long standing, sought the senatorial election in 1854 but was edged out by Judge Lyman Trumbull, an anti-Nebraska Democrat who had broken with Douglas. Lincoln became Douglas' recognized opponent when the newly formed Republican party unanimously indorsed him for senator in its 1858 convention, where Lincoln made his memorable "house divided against itself" speech.

Douglas, first elected to the senate in 1847, was a national figure when he returned to Illinois in early July, 1858, to take up the campaign for election of the legislature that would control his reelection the next year. He had received 121 votes for President in the 1856 Democratic convention and had made speeches

in several states en route from Washington, D. C.

Lincoln and Douglas had discussed political issues from the same platform for many years, the custom then being for opposing speakers to address the same crowd. Late in July Douglas announced the Democratic party's list of meetings. Lincoln, who had appeared at a number of Douglas meetings and replied to the senator, in a letter challenged Douglas to a series of debates at agreed upon places and dates. Douglas listed seven points in as many congressional districts and Lincoln agreed, the two speakers to alternate in opening for one hour, the opponent speaking an hour and a half, and the first speaker closing with a half hour rebuttal.

National attention focused on the two men, the recognized champions of the slavery and anti-slavery forces of the nation, as the debate opened in Ottawa on a hot August day.

Other debates followed in Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, and Quincy, with the series ending in Alton Oct. 15. Lincoln's adherents claimed a popular victory and his forceful speeches made him nationally known, but in the November election the Douglas forces won 40 state representatives and 14 senators to 35 representatives and 11 senators for Lincoln.



## EYES ON ILLINOIS.

Illinois voters today are facing the end of a long campaign trail. It is not the first major primary battle there in which candidates have wrestled for the nomination, but the outstanding personalities of the contenders make it of national con-

sequence. United States Senator Charles S. Deneen is opposed for re-nomination by Mrs. Ruth Hanna McCormick, congressman at large. One the season campaigner, the veteran of many battles, the other in her first term in congress but the daughter of Mark Hanna and the widow of Medill McCormick. In her own right, by inheritance, and dowered with the prestige of her late husband, Mrs. McCormick is no mean contender. Born to the political purple and nurtured in the home of its master, she drew from childhood an innate desire to be in the midst of things.

Outside their state the chief interest in the Illinois primary is whether an astute woman campaigner can overthrow a formidable foe like the senator, and the result will be eagerly awaited. That she is no ordinary woman is conceded, but it requires a person of extraordinary caliber to wage successful issues in Illinois, and that Ruth Hanna McCormick has stood the gaff of a long-drawn campaign stamps her a dangerous adversary. Each began with well-filled arsenal, financially, and throughout the campaign there has been no halt of the golden stream, sweeping into the far corners of the state to inform the voters.

American women have their eyes on Ruth Hanna today. They are wondering whether the mastery of Mark Hanna will dominate through his daughter, or whether in the final analysis Illinois voters will remain loyal to Deneen by endorsing his senatorial record with a re-nomination. Other questions have largely been relegated to the background. It is Ruth Hanna McCormick's spectacular tactics against the more conservative senator. Each has called to aid whatever mechanical appliances invention has developed. They have sped swiftly through the state by automobile and each has used, frequently, the radio to reach their audiences.

Politics today is vastly different from a few generations back. Then the magnetism of the candidate, his compelling personality and persuasive oratory, were ballast on the turbulent sea of politics. Now organization holds first place, and the candidate who can more thoroughly form his lines is safer toward victory as the polls open. Newspapers

and radio now carry the candidates opinions to the masses directly, where a short while ago, by history's record, word of mouth must transmit it, and the power of the spoken appeal was relied on.

Illinois voters hark back to the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 as the high-tide of political oratory there. Then the tall, ungainly Kentuckian and the "Little Giant" held the stage. Douglas won the senatorship again but Lincoln's way to the presidency was opened, and two years later he walked it to victory. Seventy-two years since but no campaign has sparkled with such coruscations, no equal flashing of intellectual spears against ringing shield, and no end that wrote so heavy a record in the telling story of American life.

Rising upon the back-ground of that campaign is the towering figure that was to lift mighty hand to range his nation on the side of freedom, and his voice is heard across the years to call hesitant thought into action. And out of the 1858 debates emerged a new aim of the rising desires that would not halt until no legal bonds bound slave to master. In these latter days it were well to ponder the career of the man of simple mien but kingly stature, who came like a meteor across the horizon of national experience and still burns with the fixed splendor of a planet in the political sky.

THE DEBATE with DOUGLAS was the largest single step toward giving LINCOLN a position which fortified his nomination for the Presidency. Never since the war has this great debate been more apposite or more interesting than now. The rough way in which the antagonists handled each other recalls the campaign for the Republican nomination. The word liar and its equivalents flew freely from Judge DOUGLAS, and LINCOLN took it with amusement. The standpat argument was put by the Democratic leader adroitly in many of its phases, notably in an assertion that LINCOLN was charging the Supreme Court with corruption. LINCOLN calmly replied that the court was part of "a system or scheme," "combination or conspiracy," to make slavery national, and he jeered, with his unfailing cheerfulness, at DOUGLAS's own appointment to the bench to pack it against an earlier decision, as contrasted with his noisy alarm at change. It was characteristic of DOUGLAS and standpatism to talk as if LINCOLN were undoing all the wisdom of the fathers, and of LINCOLN to say: "In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed." Had Mr. TAFT understood those words, and been able to act upon them, he might have been a successful President, instead of a man so hopelessly in antagonism to the people he is supposed to represent that he could only get a so-called renomination by a process of brazen robbery. In all of his career Mr. ROOSEVELT has never lost sight of this truth about self-government. He has led public opinion, but he has led it by understanding it.







# Stories from Illinois History

NUMBER 4

## THE SLAVERY STRUGGLE IN ILLINOIS

By PHYLLIS CONNOLLY

"Now gentlemen," said the auctioneer, "here is a very fine boy, seven years of age. I put him up at \$500. Any one say more than \$500?" (\$560 is bid.) "\$560. Nonsense! You see he is a fine, tall, healthy boy." An advance is made to \$570, then to \$580.

"Gentlemen, that is a very poor price for a boy of this size. I will sell him for \$630." (Right hand coming down on left.) "Last call. \$630 once—\$630 twice." (A pause; hand sinks.) "Gone!"\*

Impossible, we think, that such a scene could ever have taken place in the United States, yet it did—in Richmond, Virginia, in 1853. In Charleston, in Atlanta, in New Orleans, and in many other southern cities as well, Negro people were bought and sold one hundred years ago just as horses and houses now are. While most of the slaves in this country were in the South, where they labored from dawn till dusk in cotton and rice fields, slavery was not unknown north of the Ohio River. In Illinois, the slave system was introduced by the French in 1721. They soon learned, however, that slave labor was not profitable, and under the French regime, the number of slaves in Illinois was never greater than five or six hundred.

But slavery did not become an important issue in Illinois until many years after the state had passed from French and British control to become first a part of Virginia and then of the United States. Because it was included in the Northwest Territory, Illinois was governed according to terms of the Ordinance of 1787. This law, passed by Congress, prohibited slavery or involuntary servitude throughout the territory. The French inhabitants, however, were allowed to keep their slaves, since Arthur St. Clair, the new territorial governor, believed that the Ordinance did not apply to the French slaves; they were to remain in bondage, he decided, but no new slaves could be brought into the territory.

\*This account is taken from Chambers Monthly Magazine, 1853.

As new settlers came to Illinois, they were faced with a problem they had not expected: much work was to be done, laborers were scarce; wages were high. The only solution, many declared, was a system of forced labor. Some individuals, therefore, induced Negroes to sign agreements to work for a certain number of years—anywhere from ten to ninety-nine—in return for food and clothing or a small sum of money. This system was called indenturing; in practice, it was very close to slavery. Often Negroes did not realize that they had a choice in the matter, and their masters did not hesitate to take advantage of their ignorance.

By 1818, Illinois Territory had enough white settlers to qualify for statehood. First, however, the would-be state had to have a constitution, and, according to the terms of the Ordinance of 1787, that constitution could not allow slavery. Some of the old French inhabitants still held slaves and demanded guar-



An artist's version of the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Charleston, September 18, 1858.



antees against losing them. In addition, many settlers had come from the South, and they, too, wanted slavery made legal. Opposed to the pro-slavery men were others who had moved to Illinois, mainly from the Northeast, partly because they expected the territory to remain free. When, for example, future Governor Edward Coles left his Virginia home, he took with him the slaves he had inherited from his father and set them free as soon as he reached Illinois.

In the election to choose the men who would write the new state constitution, slavery became the chief issue. And when the thirty-three victorious delegates assembled at Kaskaskia for the constitutional convention in August, 1818, they argued the slavery problem heatedly and at great length. The result was a compromise. The new constitution decreed that no additional slaves or indentured Negroes could be brought into Illinois, except to work at the salt mines near Shawneetown, where labor was very scarce. Those Negroes who had been indentured before 1818 were required to serve out their time, although their children were to become free after a certain age. Any free Negro was permitted to indenture himself to a white man for a one-year period, provided he did so of his own free will and received some sort of wage—no matter how small the wage might be. Sometimes the payment was only a blanket. Thus the Illinois constitution was written to please both sides; slavery was forbidden, but indenturing was not. In December, 1818, Illinois became a state—a state that did not legally recognize slavery but nevertheless permitted it to exist.

The next year the Illinois legislature passed a series of laws concerning Negroes that was known as the Black Code. Under the code, any Negro who did not possess a "certificate of freedom," issued by a judge, could not reside in Illinois. Even though they had such certificates, many free Illinois Negroes were kidnapped, taken South, and sold back into slavery. The Black Code also denied free Negroes the right to vote. Thus, even though Illinoisans were not willing to legalize slavery, they did not want to encourage free Negroes to settle in their state. In later years the Code was made even harsher, and not until 1865 was it stricken from the laws of Illinois.

Actually neither those settlers who were in favor of slavery nor those opposed to it were satisfied with the 1818 constitution. In 1823, matters came to a head. In that year Governor Edward Coles, who was strongly against slavery, asked the state legislature to pass laws that would (1) free the Negroes still held as slaves or indentured laborers, (2) abolish the



Edward Coles, Governor of Illinois, 1822-1826.

Black Code, and (3) safeguard Negroes from kidnapping. But the legislature was dominated by men favoring slavery, and they decided instead to call a convention that would revise the constitution and make slavery legal. Before a convention could be held, however, it had first to be approved by Illinois voters. Both sides worked feverishly. Governor Coles threw himself wholeheartedly into the contest, contributing his entire four-year salary of \$4,000 to the anti-slavery cause. Election day was August 2, 1824. When the votes were counted, the proposal to call a constitutional convention had been defeated by a vote of 6,640 to 4,972. Illinois, though not welcoming free Negroes, definitely did not want to enslave them.

In the next decade, anti-slavery sentiment grew stronger. Most people, however, were content just to let slavery alone—confining it to the states where it already existed and preventing its spread. Others favored "compensated emancipation"—freeing the slaves gradually and reimbursing the owners. Still a third group, who were called "abolitionists," wanted to free all slaves immediately without granting compensation. Southerners, of course, hated the abolitionists, and many Northerners opposed them, too, fearing that they would drive the South out of the Union and bring on civil war. For a time, Illinois was



the home of one of America's most famous abolitionists, Elijah P. Lovejoy.

Lovejoy was a native New Englander, having been born in Maine, November 9, 1802. At the age of twenty-five, he came to St. Louis, where he made his living first as a teacher, then as a newspaper editor. In 1832, he decided to enter the Presbyterian ministry, and, after studying at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey, he returned to St. Louis as editor of a religious newspaper, the **St. Louis Observer**. Although Lovejoy was not at first an abolitionist, he stoutly defended the right of abolitionists to express their opinions freely. As a result, St. Louis mobs, which had rioted against abolitionism early in 1836, turned against Lovejoy and smashed his printing press.

In July, 1836, Lovejoy decided to move the **Observer** across the Mississippi to Alton, Illinois, which was not considered a strongly pro-slavery town. When the already-damaged press was landed at the Alton wharf, however, a group of men, presumably from St. Louis, threw it into the river. The citizens of Alton were indignant and promised to furnish Lovejoy with a new press. The **Observer's** editor then decided to publish his beliefs so that no one in Alton could doubt where he stood. He was not, he wrote, an abolitionist, although he was opposed to slavery. He would, moreover, "speak, write or publish whatever he pleased on any subject."

Gradually, however, Lovejoy's opinions changed, and by the end of a year he was a wholehearted abolitionist. The residents of Alton were aware of the fearless editor's new attitude, and they did not like it. On August 21, 1837, a mob broke into the **Observer** office and destroyed the press. Lovejoy immediately appealed for funds to buy a new one; freedom of speech in Illinois, he declared, was at stake. In September a new press arrived in Alton, and another mob immediately destroyed it.

Lovejoy himself was no longer safe. Stones were thrown through the windows of his house, and his life was threatened. On November 7, 1837, a third press arrived and was carried safely to a warehouse, where Lovejoy and some twenty other men prepared to stand guard. At 10 P.M., a mob, armed with stones, clubs, and pistols marched on the building and demanded the press. When they were refused, they attacked the warehouse. In the struggle that followed, Lovejoy was killed and the press was thrown into the river.

If the pro-slavery forces thought that Lovejoy's death would frighten the abolitionists into silence, they could not have been more mistaken. Anger at the murder in Alton

swept the nation, and many men who had been content to let slavery alone were now converted to the abolitionist cause. But for seventeen years after Lovejoy's "martyrdom," Illinoisans were not especially troubled by the problem of slavery. The abolitionists continued to issue a newspaper, although they published it in the safer region of northern Illinois. The so-called Underground Railroad also flourished during these years, and Illinoisans safely conducted many runaway slaves to freedom in the northern part of the state or in Canada.

Conflicts between slavery and anti-slavery forces were commonplace throughout the



Elijah P. Lovejoy

United States as well as in Illinois in the first half of the nineteenth century. In Congress a series of agreements between North and South had divided the entire country into slave or free soil. (See map, page 4.) According to the federal constitution, slavery could not be interfered with in those states where it already existed. Many people, however, believed that Congress could regulate slavery in the territories, which belonged to the whole United States. In 1820, in fact, Congress had declared that slavery would be forever prohibited from the Louisiana Purchase territory north of a line 36 degrees and 30 minutes—except in Missouri. Thirty years later, the Mexican Cession had been organized into two territories, Utah and New Mexico, without restrictions on slavery. The country had heaved a sigh of relief; the explosive problem of slavery in the territories was finally solved.





**In the 1850's America was divided over the question of slavery.**

Suddenly, in 1854, Illinois' beloved senator, Stephen A. Douglas\* overturned these earlier compromises when he persuaded Congress to pass his Kansas-Nebraska Bill. This act called for the organization of two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, from the Louisiana Purchase region, which ordinarily would have been free. Instead, Douglas wrote into the bill a principle which he termed "popular sovereignty": let the people of the territories decide for themselves whether or not they would have slavery. Douglas thought this was the only truly democratic way to solve the problem, but other northerners accused him of betraying the cause of freedom. By 1858, the issue of slavery in the territories was hotter than ever.

In that year, Douglas' term as senator was over, and he decided to run for re-election. His opponent was a middle-aged lawyer, with unruly hair, ill-fitting clothes, and a large fund of witty stories. His name was Abraham Lincoln. Throughout the hot summer and chilly autumn of 1858, Lincoln and Douglas argued the problem of slavery. All told, Douglas made 130 speeches, while Lincoln spoke sixty-three times. At seven towns they met in joint debate: Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and Alton. Their voices rang the length and breadth of Illinois, and the echo was heard by the entire nation—a nation torn almost in two over the question of the extension of slavery. Everyone knew that Douglas, the Little Giant, would, if re-elected, undoubtedly be the Democratic party's choice for the presidency in 1860. But Lincoln, the rail-splitting, backwoods Republican lawyer, was virtually unknown outside of his own state. The nation—looking to the Western prairies for leadership—listened to what he had to say.

Back in Illinois, however, few people realized that shortly these two men would help determine the future of their country. True,

Illinoisans gathered by the thousands to hear Honest Abe tackle the Little Giant. The debates, they thought, were more fun than a circus. Brass bands, booming cannon, and carriages filled with lovely young ladies waving banners and representing the states of the Union, met the debaters on their arrival in almost every town. Loyal supporters flocked to the debates from miles around, attracted, perhaps, as much by the barbecues and ice cream socials that were a part of the day's events as by the speeches. But listening to the oratory was also fun. At Ottawa, Lincoln's supporters triumphantly carried him on their shoulders from the speakers' platform to his hotel. When Douglas afterward accused his opponent of being so weak that he could not walk, Lincoln retorted that he was strong enough to pick up the Senator, carry him to his hotel, and put him to bed.

Despite the high spirits and the carnival atmosphere, the debates were deadly serious. In his speeches, Douglas defended his popular sovereignty principle, even though the United States Supreme Court had decided the year before that residents of a territory did not have the right to vote on whether or not they would have slavery. Douglas also accused Lincoln of trying to bring about civil war and maintained that Negroes should not have equal rights with white men. Lincoln, on the other hand, declared that slavery was an absolute evil, that it should be confined to the South, and that the territories should be kept free. Douglas seemingly did not care what happened to slavery; the wretched condition of most Negroes did not disturb him. Lincoln, however, was haunted by the thought of men in bondage. "The real issue," he declared, was not the victory of any one candidate in the election but the "eternal struggle between . . . right and wrong."

And that struggle was destined to be a bloody one for Americans. In 1858 Douglas won re-election to the Senate, but two years later, he lost the presidency of the United States to his old rival, Lincoln. Together they saw their country broken in two on the black rock of slavery, though only Lincoln lived to see the final victory and the preservation of the Union. And it was Lincoln who, on January 1, 1863, by presidential proclamation freed the slaves. The slavery struggle in Illinois, and in the nation, at last was over.

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\*See "Stories from Illinois History," Number 5.

## "BATTLES OF THE GIANTS"



N a few weeks after the "Lost Speech," while Lincoln was "out on the Circuit," at Urbana, Illinois, word was brought to him that he had just received one hundred and ten votes at the Republican Convention, assembled in Philadelphia, for the vice-presidential nomination. He looked incredulous and shrugged his shoulders, saying he did not think the votes were for him. "There's another great man named Lincoln down in Massachusetts. I guess he's the man," he explained.

In 1858 Lincoln was nominated to represent Illinois in the Senate, in Douglas's place. He and Senator Douglas made the most memorable senatorial canvass in history. The question of slavery was discussed everywhere. Lincoln challenged Douglas to join in a series of debates, and the "Little Giant" reluctantly accepted. Seven towns, in all sections of the State, were chosen, and the dates ranged from August to October. The average attendance at these debates was estimated at ten thousand. Debate day was a holiday for each region. Thousands of people came scores of miles; many migrated from adjoining counties and States, and encamped round about the places where the debates were held. There were demonstrations in favor of each of the rival candidates, and all over Illinois there were processions, picnics, fairs, barbecues, floral parades, bands, and so on.

Senator Douglas was a skilled and polished speaker, and he was among his friends. The railroads placed special cars and even trains at his disposal. He had everything to lose and Lincoln had everything to win. Douglas began with a domineering, if not insulting, demeanor toward his almost unknown antagonist. Lincoln's best friends thought his challenging Douglas was a grand blunder. But Lincoln was deeply, thoroughly, in earnest. He told but few stories. His voice rang, high and clear, to the outer edges of the great throngs, but Douglas soon became hoarse, speaking with great difficulty, sometimes barking like a dog.

Lincoln's sincerity, logic, quick-wittedness and good nature won the day. He often parried and turned back Douglas's savage blows upon himself like a boomerang. Douglas propounded a set of questions for Lincoln to answer. Lincoln answered these and asked Douglas several questions. Among them was one which forced Douglas to interpret the Dred Scott decision. Lincoln's friends said, "If you ask that you will lose the senatorship." Lincoln replied, "Yes; but the fight of 1860 will be worth a hundred of this." Douglas walked right into Lincoln's trap. He answered "the Freeport question" to suit his hearers in Illinois, but offended the South—for the whole country, through the newspapers, was now breathlessly watching the struggle.

Douglas was elected to the Senate, though a greater popular vote was polled for Lincoln principles.

Lincoln took his defeat gracefully. He did not pretend that he was not disappointed. He said he was "like the boy that stumped his toe—hurt too bad to laugh, and too big to cry."



Lincoln answered these



## LINCOLN THE DEBATER

"And now Abraham Lincoln, the man who in 1830 undertook to split for Mrs. Nancy Miller 400 rails for every yard of brown jean dyed with walnut bark that would be required to make him a pair of trowsers, the flat-boatman, local stump-speaker, and country lawyer, rose from his seat, stretched his long bony limbs upward as if to get them into working order, and stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit, very tall, very dark, very gaunt, and very rugged: his swarthy features stamped with a sad serenity, and the instant he began to speak the ungainly mouth lost its heaviness, the half-listless eyes attained a wondrous power," says Francis Grierson, in his book, "The Valley of the Shadows."

"There were other very tall dark men in the heterogeneous assembly, but not one who resembled the speaker. Every movement of his long muscular frame denoted inflexible earnestness," and Mr. Grierson, as he recalls it now, even then felt what Lincoln had been, and what he was, and what he was to be.

"There were moments when he seemed all legs and feet, and again he appeared all head and neck; yet every look of the deep-set eyes, every movement of the prominent jaw, every wave of the hair-gripping hand, produced an impression, and before he had spoken twenty minutes the conviction took possession of thousands that here was the prophetic man of the present and the political saviour of the future. Judges of human nature saw at a glance that a man ungainly, so natural, so earnest and forcible, had no place in his mental economy for the thing called vanity."

Douglas had been "theatrical and se-

arly, but this tall homely man was creating by his very looks what the brilliant lawyer and experienced senator had failed to make the people see and feel." As Mr. Grierson sees it the affectations of Douglas, "usually so effective when he addressed an audience, went for nothing when brought face to face with realities."

# TWO DEBATERS STIRRED U.S. IN 1858 CAMPAIGN

## Lincoln and Douglas Battled Over Slavery on Illinois Platforms

The United States, torn for many years over the question of slavery, turned its eyes toward Illinois in 1858 when Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas staged a series of debates on slavery in their campaign for election to the U. S. senate.

Douglas shortly before had led the fight for enactment of a bill to permit Nebraska and Kansas to enter the union after voting on whether they would have slavery. Passage of the bill intensified feeling throughout the country and when Douglas returned to Illinois he was booed liberally during a public address in Chicago in which he sought to defend his actions.

The republican party had been organized by men opposed to the spread of slavery. Its leaders were Lincoln, O. H. Browning, John M. Palmer, Richard Yates, Owen Lovejoy, Lyman Trumbull, Richard J. Oglesby and others. In 1856 it elected William H. Bissell governor. Illinois had become a leading battleground on which the question of slavery was fought.

Douglas was an exponent of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, a stand which he defended throughout his career. He opposed President Buchanan on the admission of Kansas and failing to obtain support he sought in Washington, he brought the fight into Illinois. When Lincoln challenged him to debate the issues, he accepted, fighting as before.

### Had Special Train

He had plenty of money and at his disposal was a special train of the Illinois Central which would carry him up and down the state. Lincoln had virtually nothing and was at a disadvantage in staging his campaign. But Douglas saw in the debates a better chance to present his side of the picture to the citizens of Illinois. He threw his whole soul into the tiffs with Lincoln and waived his financial advantage to fight on common ground.

Both debaters were able men, both experienced in politics, both men who rose from virtually nothing.

The debates were held in Ottawa, Freeport, Galesburg, Quincy, Alton, Jonesboro and Charleston. The first speaker held the stage, for an hour; his opponent spoke for an hour and a half; and a half hour was allowed the first speaker for rebuttal. Lincoln and Douglas alternated as the opening speakers and the political maneuvering created much interest, drawing crowds for miles.

### Douglas Wins Election

Douglas was elected to the senate for the third time at the end of the campaign, causing Jesse K. Dubois, state auditor and one of Lincoln's closest friends, to say to the latter: "You have merely helped to elect Douglas senator."

"Well, Jesse, it may be as you say, I have elected Douglas, but I have elected a republican president in 1860," Lincoln responded. So it proved, for "Honest Abe" was selected as president in the following election.

Before the debates Lincoln and Douglas had spoken in Chicago, Springfield and other cities and had answered each other's arguments.

Douglas had asserted boldly that states had the right to decide for themselves on the question of slavery. Lincoln, who was opposed to the extension of slavery but was not an abolitionist, had stated before his party's convention: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all of one thing or all of the other."

Thus in 1858 the two intellectual giants met, Douglas the "Little Giant" and "Honest Abe."

Farm wagons came for miles to the towns where the two men debated. Stylish clothes showed that many were present from Chicago. Crowds of persons before each meeting gathered to argue the merits of issues and to help swing support to their individual leaders.

### Debaters Contrasted

The two debaters were strikingly contrasted in appearance. Lincoln was tall. His hair was bushy. He was rawboned, uncouth in dress, wore ill fitting clothes and had a face which drew sympathy from his hearers.

Douglas was barely five feet tall. His legs were short, his body of full size and inclined to be fleshy, his head set on a thick neck. His face was not handsome but "power" was written all over it. His forehead was broad, high and prominent, his eyes well set and piercing, his nose broad and flaring at the nostrils, the mouth large and his chin firm and square.

Lincoln used many anecdotes in his remarks and with his keen wit turned aside many of his opponent's most tell-tale points of argument. Douglas took the opposite manner, carrying his audience by force of will, giving no quarter and asking none. His manner was bold and confident. Lincoln led; Douglas drove, his deep bass voice rising and falling like the

beating of a huge sledge hammer driving home the arguments.

### Neither Side-Steps

Neither debater feared dangerous ground and side-stepped no issue.

Lincoln, in simple, concise language, made clear he was not opposed to repeal of the fugitive slave law, he was not against admission of any more slave states to the union, nor against admission of any state which had a constitution giving the people the right to vote on slavery. He made clear he did not oppose abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, or the prohibition of slave trading between states, but he was pledged to the belief in the right and duty of congress to prohibit



y in territories. He made clear although he was opposed to acquiring new territory unless slavery was prohibited he would or not oppose such acquisition singly as he might think it or would not aggravate the y question over the nation.

#### Asks Questions

sought to embarrass Douglas by g if he favored the admission nsas if a constitution should be ed before the territory had h inhabitants, if he believed eople of any territory might ex-slavery before the constitution rmed, if he would adopt a su-e court ruling on exclusion of y as the proper rule of action. ally, he asked Douglas if he

avored acquiring territory in disre-gard to how it might affect the na-tion on the slavery question.

#### Douglas Answers

Douglas didn't dodge the questions put to him. If a territory had enough people to be admitted as a slave state it had population enough for a free state, he said. Either Kansas must come in as a free state with whatever population it had or the rule must be applied to other territories, also. He said it was his opinion the people of a territory might exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a constitution and it did not matter what the supreme court may decide on slavery since local police enforce the laws

and the legislature of each state would set up laws on slavery to suit themselves.

He disposed of the last question by remarking that when the time came for acquiring more territory the land should be added without reference to slavery and the people should be left free to decide whether they lived in free or slave territory.

Douglas supported each of his remarks with argument after argument, attempting to win over his hearers and, in fact, carrying them to his way of thinking with an impenetrable mass of facts which he hurled at his adversary with irresistible force.

#### Tells Funny Stories

Concluding, he had the audience

under a spell. Lincoln, however, knew how to break down the wall established. He told a funny story. As his hearers laughed he went into the new matters briefly, casually breaking the force of the arguments.

At the close of the rebuttal the crowd cheered, each party applauding its leaders and trying to drown out the noise of the other.

## LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE.

### It Had the Most Important Political Effects.

The term of Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, was about to expire and he was a candidate for re-election at the hands of the democratic party. Douglas was the most prominent democrat in the North, had hosts of friends and was looked upon as a possible candidate for President at the coming election of 1860. The republican convention of Illinois met June 16, 1858, and formally presented Abraham Lincoln as its first and only choice for senator to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration

of Senator Douglas's term of office. On the evening of that day Mr. Lincoln read the opening paragraph of his speech accepting the honor to his partner, Mr. Herndon, asking him, "How do you like that?"

The paragraph was one of the most important that any republican had yet delivered in public and there was some question as to whether it would be wise and politic to deliver it. It was:

"If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far on in the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis has been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall. But I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the farther spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new; North as well as South."

Before delivering his speech he said to Mr. Herndon and other friends, "I am thoroughly convinced the time has come when it should be uttered, and if it must be that I must go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to the truth, die in the advocacy of what is just and right. This nation cannot live on injustice. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand,' I say again and again."

This was practically the opening of the campaign for the senatorship between Mr. Lincoln and Senator Douglas, although it was later that Lincoln challenged the senator to a joint debate which proved to be of the greatest significance. Senator Douglas, like Lincoln, had risen from the common people and had migrated from Vermont with his father trailing along with an ox cart, and he knew something of the rough and ready life that Lincoln knew. In fact, as we have seen, he was one of the group that used to sit at the fireside in Joshua Speed's store when Lincoln began his life in Springfield. There was intense interest in these two men throughout the country. They were almost exactly opposite each other in all things, in personal appearance and in the study of the political questions of the time. Douglas was short and fat, with a leonine head. He was an accomplished and finished speaker, and was familiar with a wider social life than Lincoln had ever enjoyed. He was known throughout the country as "The Little

Giant" and was exceedingly popular. Mr. Lincoln was lean and long, considered homely in his looks, and was unable to dress as finely as his opponent. He was known as "Honest Abe" and he had a large following, which was largely confined to Illinois. He had not become a national character. He was a speaker who had the mastery of singularly effective style, his English was direct and without ornamentation, he could tell a good story on the "stump" and he had an amazing fund of illustrative matter, picked up in the course of his frontier experiences and his study and practice of law in a new country.

The debate was confined to seven meetings in important towns of the state. The plan of the debate was that on each evening one should speak an hour in opening, the other an hour and a half in reply, the first speaker to have half an hour in reply, alternating as to the first hour as they should move along the series. Mr. Lincoln made thirty-one speeches in addition to the debates during the campaign. Mr. Douglas went about the state on special trains furnished by the Illinois Central railroad and in charge of Captain George B. McClellan, who was then general manager of the road. He was accompanied by a large retinue of federal office holders and prominent democrats from other states were frequently on the trains. Mr. Lincoln was obliged to make his way as best he could, and not infrequently while he was waiting at a wayside station for the regular train, Senator Douglas's train with lithographs and flags flying would whizz past him.

The meetings were attended by enormous crowds, people coming twenty to thirty miles in carriages and wagons to hear the speakers, devoting two or three days to the excursion. The local excitement was intense, salutes would be fired, some prominent man would present the speakers and often committees of ladies would present flowers to the speakers. After a meeting at Ottawa, a party of Mr. Lincoln's admirers carried him on their shoulders. Lincoln did not underrate the ability of his opponent and on one occasion took occasion to speak highly of him and of his success in life, whereas his own life had been a "flat failure." He knew Douglas, however, better than Douglas knew himself and was ready and keen to take advantage of everything possible. He knew that no man in the country was so adroit or aggressive or gifted in the tricks and strategy in debate, and in this contest Douglas showed his fullest powers.

Mr. Lincoln was diffident as he came before his audiences, but that diffidence wore away as he entered into his theme with naturalness and fervor. He made few gestures until he was well under way. He stood squarely on his feet and made few changes of pose. He was cool and self-possessed after a time and was always clear, terse and compact. In argument he was logical, demonstrative and fair. The debate came to its climax at Freeport when Mr. Lincoln, after much thought and study, put to Senator Douglas the now famous "Freeport Question." This was in the town of Freeport, August 27, 1858, after the senator had asked him a series of questions in an endeavor to convince the audience that Lincoln was pledged to the repeal of the fugitive slave law, to resist the admission of any more slave states, to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, to the prohibition of the slave trade between the states, to the prohibition of slavery in the territories, and to oppose the acquisition of any new territory unless slavery was prohibited therein. Mr. Lincoln simply said that he was pledged to no proposition ex-

cept the prohibition of slavery in all the territories of the United States. He then propounded this question to Senator Douglas:

"Can the people of a United States territory in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a state constitution?"

Mr. Lincoln rejected the advice of his friends and devoted adherents in propounding this question, but he had a definite purpose in it. He knew that whichever way Douglas answered it, he would bring about a break in the democratic party in the country in its relation to his ambition for the Presidency. He foresaw that if he said "No" his following in Illinois would diminish, and if he said "Yes" the Southern democrats, satisfied with the Dred Scott Decision and doubtful of the expedience of "popular sovereignty" would repudiate him at once.



# THE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES.

## The Most Famous Platform Contest in Our History.

OF all the local political contests in our country probably none has been more notable than that marked by the debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas.

The questions discussed were those growing out of the issue of slavery, which was so soon to plunge the land into war. By the Missouri Compromise of 1820 Missouri had been admitted to the Union as a slave State on the condition that slavery should be forbidden in all the rest of the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern boundary. In 1854 Douglas, then chairman of the Senate committee on Territories, offered a bill repealing the Missouri Compromise and providing for making of the great northern region affected by it two Territories called Kansas and Nebraska, the question of the admission of slavery into them to be decided by "popular sovereignty" or the vote of the inhabitants. The measure was carried, but aroused intense indignation in the North. In March, 1857, the Supreme Court in the notorious Dred Scott decision declared the Missouri Compromise void, and maintained that neither Congress nor a Territorial legislature could forbid slavery in a Territory. A year later it was proposed to admit Kansas to the Union as a slave Territory on the basis of the so-called Lecompton constitution, which had been framed and adopted by the use of unfair means. This Douglas opposed, and it was defeated. Thus he regained favor with his Northern constituents.

Just at this time Douglas's second term

as Senator was drawing toward the close. The Democrats of Illinois expressed their approval of him. The Republican party, organized in 1854, was an outcome of the Kansas-Nebraska law, and was opposed to the extension of slavery. Republicans in Eastern States favored the choice of Douglas, but Illinois Republicans, knowing him better, held that he had nothing in common with their principles, and that his position on the Lecompton constitution was due only to his belief that it did not express the will of the people of Kansas, and was contrary to his favorite principle of popular sovereignty, or "squatter sovereignty" as it was nicknamed. They put forward Lincoln as their candidate for the Senate. Douglas went from Washington to Illinois to take part in the campaign.

Douglas had been born in the free State of Vermont; his rival, in the slave State of Kentucky; but both had spent most of their lives in Illinois, where they had been prominent in public affairs. Both had known poverty and struggle in their early years. Together they had served in the Illinois legislature; they had both been in Congress, but Lincoln had returned to his practice of law; and Judge Douglas had continued and become a leader in the Senate. They were personal friends when representing opposite political views. Now they were to be rivals for the same position while champions on different sides of the great national issue. Lincoln had long before made up his mind to hit slavery hard when he had a chance; Douglas pro-

fessed personal indifference about the action on slavery by the people of any Territory, whether they voted it up or down.

The "Little Giant," as Douglas was called, was below the average height, graceful, affable, one of the first orators of the country. Lincoln was tall, ungainly, with a melancholy countenance and unmelodious voice, but with a keenness of thought and clearness of statement that made him a dangerous antagonist. Douglas called him a "kind, amiable, and intelligent gentleman, a good citizen and an honorable opponent," "full of wit, facts, dates," "the best stump speaker in the West," "as honest as he is shrewd."

At the beginning of the campaign Lincoln outlined the situation in a speech containing the famous phrases: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free." At Lincoln's request arrangements were made for seven meetings at which the two candidates spoke from the same platform. Douglas put some questions to Lincoln, which gave him the chance to ask some in his turn, particularly this: "Can the people of a United States Territory in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State constitution?"

Lincoln was warned that Douglas would answer his questions by an evasion of the point that would win him Northern support and the senatorship. His reply was that in that case Douglas could never be President, and "the battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this." In 1852 Douglas had received a good number of votes for the presidential nomination, but he could not hope for it without the Southern support he sought. The prophecies proved true. Though gaining a popular majority in the State, Lincoln failed of election by the legislature; and Douglas returned to the Senate, only to be defeated two years later when he sought to be President. On the other hand, the ability and statesmanship shown by Lincoln during the great debates made him henceforth a national figure. In 1856 he had failed of nomination as Vice-President; in 1860 he was made President by a decisive vote; and, when the great national crisis came, he received a pledge of loyal support from his old rival.

Guests at the Lincoln tomb frequently say "Lincoln and Douglas debated at my home town." Inquiry often brings out the fact that one spoke at one time and the other at another. Historically speaking the Lincoln and Douglas debates were in seven cities, and one spoke for half an hour, the other followed for an hour and the other had a half hour rebuttal. The time varied slightly but was according to agreement. They both spoke from the same platform.

The debates and dates were as follows:

1. Ottawa, Aug. 21, 1858.
2. Freeport, Aug. 27, 1858.
3. Jonesboro, Sept. 15, 1858.
4. Charleston, Sept. 18, 1858.
5. Galesburg, Oct. 7, 1858.
6. Quincy, Oct. 13, 1858.
7. Alton, Oct. 15, 1858.

Markers have been placed to indicate the places.

U. S. G. P. O. ———

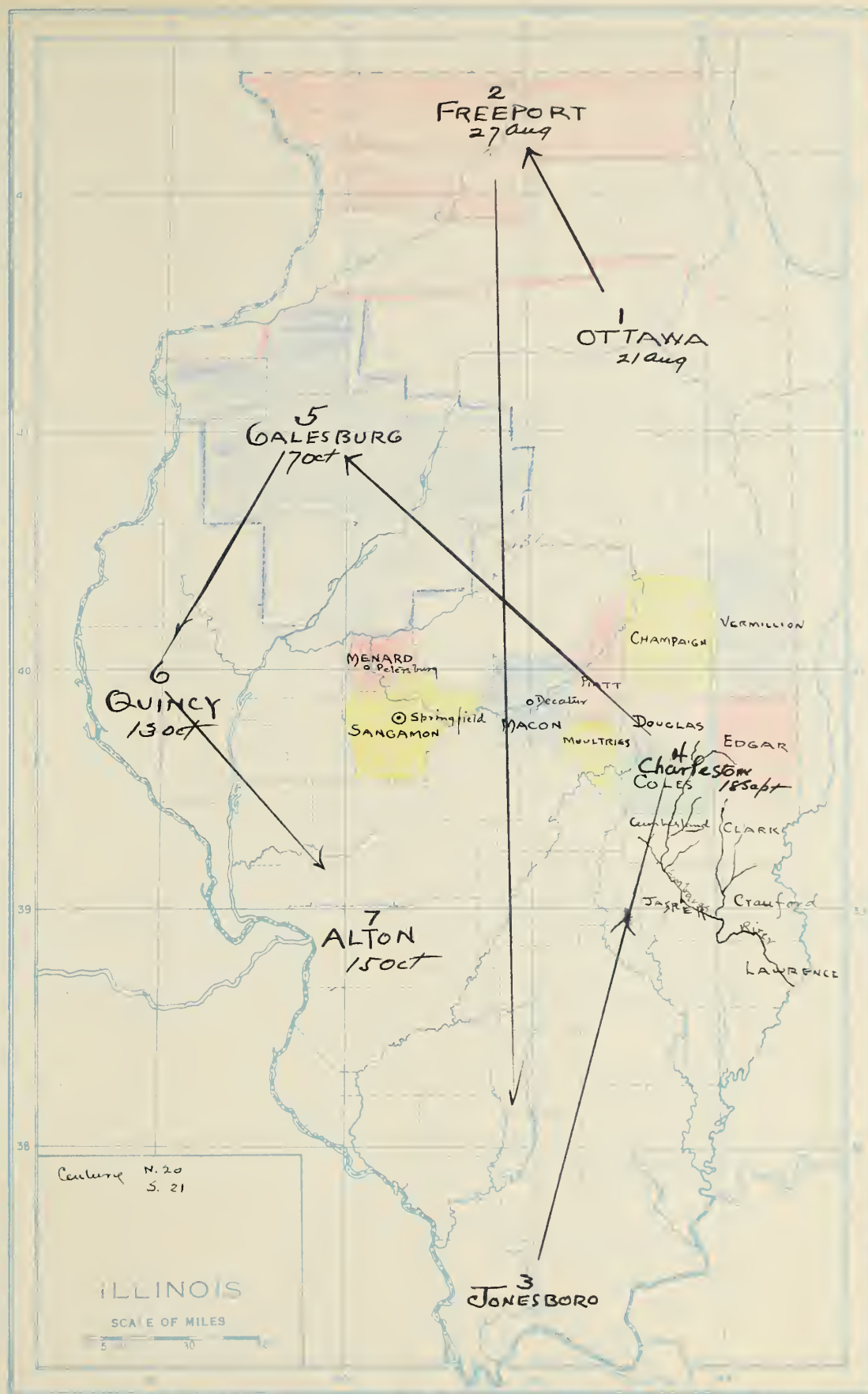


Debates - W. Kelly.

"This ~~last~~ famous debate was an  
education for the young men and people  
of the county, aroused ~~such~~ as much  
to do with shaping and moulding public  
opinion, as our agent I can now recall."

W. Kelly, at Kanakahee Oct 15 1898

*Ill. in life from 1850-1860*





## POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

These territories, when seeking admission into the Union as states, could decide by their constitution whether they desired to come in as slave states or free, and he (Douglas) did not care how they voted, whether it were up or down.

This is what he denominated as popular sovereignty—dubbed as "squatter sovereignty" by the masses. This contemplated extension of slavery did not appeal to the people—not even to the conservative wing of his own party—and Judge Douglas must have known and felt it there and then.

It was received with scant approval and no applause.

The learned judge wisely drew his remarks to a close.

Before doing so, however, he turned to pay Mr. Lincoln a compliment—a left-hand compliment—which he soon had occasion to regret. He stated that he had long known Mr. Lincoln, and known him to honor him. That while he and Mr. Lincoln were aspiring for position in old Sangamon county, Illinois, that he (Douglas) was an honorable school teacher; his friend Lincoln was an honorable grog-shop keeper; that he could spoil more whisky than any man in town, and the manner in which he would preside at horse and foot races was enough to excite the admiration and win the praise of all who were present and participated. Of course, the Democratic hats and shouts went up.

## TURN TO LINCOLN

All eyes were now turned to Mr. Lincoln, who arose to speak. His friends were a little apprehensive lest he should fail to recover from this sally of wit. Their fears were soon allayed, however. He remarked that few men liked to hear themselves misrepresented; but when misrepresentations became so gross and perverse as they had on this occasion they were apt to amuse more than anything else. He did not know, he stated, that he ever kept a grog shop, as alleged by the judge, but he did recall that while he kept a store, on one counter of which whisky was sold, that while he was officiating on one side of the counter Judge Douglas was on the other and the best customer he had. He further had this to say that while he (Lincoln) had long since left his side of the counter he was sorry to say that up to this very hour Judge Douglas had not left his side.

This rejoinder evoked prolonged applause.

Mr. Lincoln now had his audience and held it closely to the end. Without many preliminaries he went quickly to the heart of his subject. Judge Douglas was soon put on the defensive and confronted with his own record. Mr. Lincoln propounded many questions as to his vote in congress, and requested an answer yea or nay, and that he could take either horn of the dilemma he choose. No matter which way the judge answered it got him in a compromising position. He fairly squirmed under the interrogatory pelting that Lincoln gave him.

The great commoner bitterly assailed the position of Douglas on

the extension of slavery in new territory, asserting that as congress held full control over these new territories it possessed the undoubted right to prevent the introduction of slavery therein. Mr. Lincoln was not inclined to interfere with the institution of slavery in states where it already existed, but that congress should prevent, with all the power at its command, its further extension. In this position he was fully indorsed by Republicans and many Northern Democrats as well.

He further stated that in his judgment the country could not remain long half slave and half free. It must be all one or the other. "A house divided against itself could not stand." The country thus divided could not long endure. He did not expect the house would fall, he did not expect the country to perish, but it must cease to be divided. Either the opponents of slavery would prevent its further extension and place it where the public mind would rest in the belief that it was in the course of ultimate extinction, or its friends would extend it more and more till it became lawful in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South.

Thus did Mr. Lincoln continue for an hour and half discussing the profound questions that were then agitating the minds of the people. The enthusiasm attending his closing address was unbounded and it was said that 5000 people rushed forward to shake his hand and congratulate him. However, but few could reach his stand, as several seized and threw him over the shoulders of a stalwart and took him to the nearby home of the mayor, where he was entertained. Thus ended the first of a series of debates, the greatest ever heard probably on American soil.

## VICTORY FOR LINCOLN

Both were eminent speakers, but Lincoln was the evident victor, if the enthusiasm and plaudits were indications of the popular mind.

It was the consensus of opinion that in the debates of these giants during the following campaign Mr. Lincoln maintained his supremacy and was regarded as a debater without a peer in his state. In the subsequent addresses of Mr. Lincoln during his presidential campaign he was placed in the front rank of the foremost orators of the nation, and in the minds of many he was the greatest political orator that ever graced an American platform.





